

# 202P

## MAGAZINE

VOLUME 2 - MAY 2006

# ITS 3:30 P.M

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR  
CHILDREN ARE?

INDY DEVELOPERS SPEAK

# STARDOCK

WE LOOK INTO INDEPENT GAME DEVELOPMENT WITH  
AN INTERVIEW FROM STARDOCK ENTERTAINMENT

## INSIDE ISSUE 2

- XBL DIAMOND CARD
- AGIEA AND THE PHYSX PROCESSOR
- MAJOR LEAGUE GAMING
- SEX & VIOLENCE IN VIDEO GAMES
- THE LEGEND OF "THE LEGEND OF ZELDA"
- XBL PARENTAL SUPERVISION

## GALACTIC CIVILIZATIONS II: DREAD LORDS

WOMEN TALK ABOUT THEIR GAMING EXPERIENCES  
ROCKSTAR TABLE TENNIS  
AND MORE...

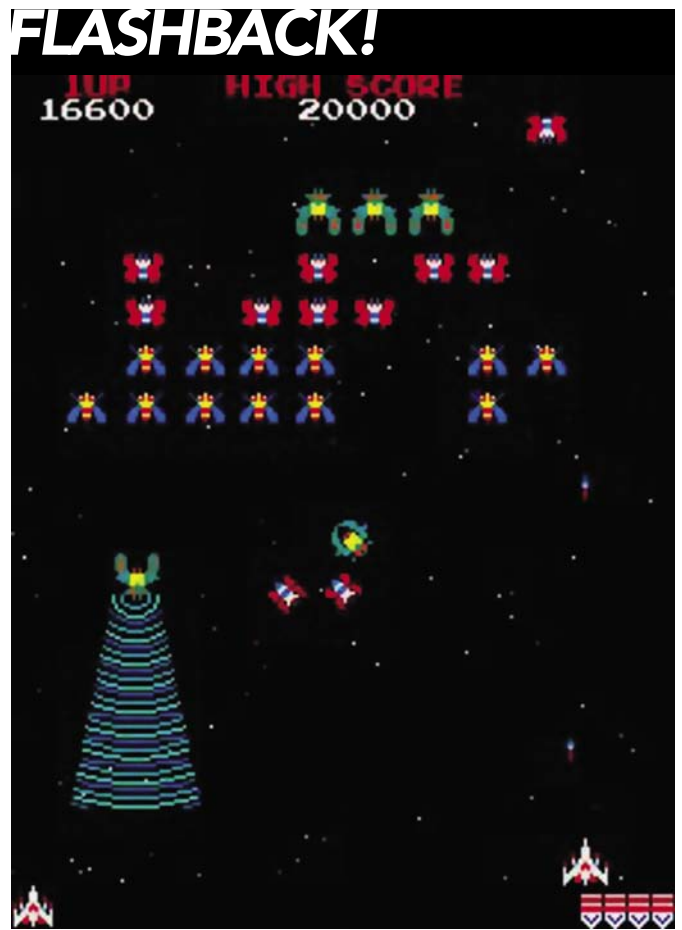


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20LD2TYPE PODCAST - RELEASE DATES - WEEKEND RENTALS - LESTER'S WORLD

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*Did you know?*  
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## Special Thanks To:

Stardock Entertainment ([www.stardock.com](http://www.stardock.com)) for providing 2o2p Magazine with a great interview and a copy of Galactic Civilization II: Dread Lords to give away to our community.

# The Editor Pwns You!

## Can we do it a second time?

There are many individuals that make a difference in all walks of life. Occasionally, there are individuals that we meet along the way that we instantly befriend, while others we instantly wish to avoid. However, nothing can stop the power of many individuals working together to form a community.

This month, I was blown away by just how powerful the 2old2play community is. Many events happened this month, some humorous and some downright frightening. Yet the community pulled together to celebrate, game, heal, and to help. A strong community brings out the best contributions of each and every member.

The first issue of 2o2p Magazine was more of a success than I had imagined. At the time of this writing, the first issue has been downloaded 1,059 times from our site. I have received numerous e-mails thanking us for our effort, and over eighty percent of those emails also contained a request to assist in future efforts. We have over twenty-five members "on call" for articles, five talented illustrators/artist/designers, and nine editors including myself. The first issue had two full time editors (my wife and I), one designer, one illustrator, and a handful of content contributors. All these people have come forth since learning about the magazine effort. Simply amazing.

I have over one hundred pages of content, not all could be included in this issue. Issue #3 already has thirty pages of content, and I have recently published some topics to discuss in issue #3 in my blog on [www.2old2play.com](http://www.2old2play.com). I hope that issue #2 is even better than its predecessor, and that issue #3 will go another big step beyond what you're reading now.

I want to thank all those that contributed to the magazine this month, and for those that have already begun work on issue #3. I want to thank the designers and illustrators for not attempting any forms of assassination (that were not thwarted) for the rushed delivery dates on this issue. We had a lot of content and very little time to put it all together. The design crew dropped a professional layout on the content in under a week while managing work and home life.

To the editing team I want to extend my thanks for the amount of text you had to read through over the last three weeks. I feel bad for those that did not check their mail often enough and received five to ten e-mail attachments. Expect this to occur again next month and the month after that. I hope you get the idea.

Over the next few months I hope to make contact with publishers, game developers, and other people in the field. My goal is to get some interviews, some game demos, and perhaps the ability to get into some closed door alpha/beta tests for first chance reviews. I want to make this magazine a place for the community to go when they want to know what's happening in the world of gaming.

Due to E3, we've rushed this release out the door to get it on the website and ready for download before the mayhem that is E3. I am uncertain about the successful launch of issue #2 because of the media swarm on the Internet chatting about E3, but, mere possibilities can't and won't prevent issue #2 from hitting the virtual shelves. It is good. The contributors are great. We've all put much of our heart into this issue. So here it is!

Thanks,

**Derrick Schommer (CodeMonkey)**

[editor@2old2play.com](mailto:editor@2old2play.com)



## Helping you speak like a complete dork

**AFAIK:** as far as I know.

**AFK:** Away from keyboard.

**GG:** good game.

**G2G or GTG:** got to go or good to go.

**KK:** okay.

**Linux:** (also known as GNU/Linux) is a computer operating system. It is one of the most prominent examples of free software and of open source development; unlike proprietary operating systems such as Windows or Macintosh, all of its underlying source code is available to the public for anyone to freely use, modify, improve, and redistribute.

**Modder:** Mod or modification is a term generally applied to computer games, especially first-person shooters and real-time strategy games. Mods are made by the general public, and can be entirely new games in themselves. They can include new items, weapons, characters, enemies, models, modes, textures, levels, and story lines. They also usually take place in unique locations. They can be single-player or multiplayer. Mods that add new content to the underlying game are often called partial conversions, while mods that create an entirely new game are called total conversions. *Counter Strike* is a total conversion mod of *Half-Life*.

**MLG:** Major League Gaming. MLG is the largest organized league and international sanctioning body for the world's fastest growing competitive sport: *professional video gaming*. Recognized as the global governing authority for millions of competitive gamers worldwide, MLG's ongoing professional video gaming tournaments have attracted competitors from over 28 countries.

**NSFW:** not safe for work (often used as a warning that a link contains racy or pornographic images)

**N00b Stick:** The auto-shotgun in *Counter Strike*. Known to be the easiest gun to kill anyone with and requires very little talent to use.

**ROTFLMAO:** Rolling on the floor laughing my ass off.

**QoS:** "Quality of Service" refers to the probability of the communication network meeting a given traffic 'contract', or in many cases is used informally to refer to the probability of a network transmission succeeding in passing between two points in the network. Using QoS one can prioritize Xbox game network traffic over a PC downloading files on the Internet, exploring the web, or Voice over IP (VoIP) transmissions such as Team Speak. Almost all network services can be prioritized to fit the needs of the user.

**RL:** The abbreviation RL stands for "real life", with the meaning "not on the Internet." For example, one can speak of meeting in RL someone whom one has met in chat or on a Internet forum, or of inability to use the Internet for a time due to "RL problems"

**RTFM:** is an abbreviation for the statement "Read The Fuck-ing Manual." This instruction is sometimes given in response to a question when the person being asked believes that the question could be easily answered by reading relevant documentation. The "F" can sometimes be substituted for some-

thing less harsh such as "Freaking", "Flaming", "Full", "Fine", "Friendly", "Fabulous", or "Fascinating."

**Threading:** Threads are a way for a program to split itself into two or more simultaneously running tasks. (The name "thread" is by analogy with the way that a number of threads are interwoven to make a piece of fabric). Multiple threads can be executed in parallel on many computer systems.

**Timmy:** The term used by the *2old2play* gaming community to represent a youthful kid that does not exactly know how to close their mouth. A "timmy" is classified as one that smack talks to excess in and out of the game, is typically spoiled and gets all the good toys, contains an ignorant tech-numb family, uses hacks to gain levels, and believes they have the most mad skills in the neighborhood (which to them means "Internet"). Originally 'Timmy' was a story based on "Timmy Smith" posted on Bungie ([www.bungie.net](http://www.bungie.net)), by Agonizing Gas, as a satire about a real life boy that finds out that he does not actually 'pwn n00bs' as much as he once thought.

**Troll:** One who deliberately stirs up trouble or posts false information in online forums or message boards.

**Wii:** New name for Nintendo's next-generation console. Used to be known as the "revolution."

**XBL:** Xbox Live! This abbreviation is used by Microsoft console gamers to reference the Microsoft networking subsystem that links all subscribers together.

**Zerg:** To use overwhelming numbers to overcome an enemy (originated with Blizzard's *Starcraft* but now more commonly refers to many lower-leveled players overcoming a higher-leveled player).

Join **2old2play** for a few rounds of golf every Wednesday night.

Feel like relaxing after a hard day of work? Perhaps Wednesday night is rainy and cold but you are itching to putt around the green. Signup to get into next Wednesday night's game on the *2old2play* message forum "Tournament / Schedule Area".

Playing with the *2old2play* crew is on par with playing with the pro's... except for the headset, the controller, and your inability to make a professional league in RL. Hell, you probably could take on Tiger Woods and win (in the video game version).

Don't wait until the last minute, get your clubs over to [2old2play.com](http://2old2play.com) and write in your tee time before it's too late!



# 2old2type Podcast

Episodes 22 - 24



## The 2old2type podcasts consists of three personalities:

**Doodirock:** *The man with the master plan to bring news and information to the twenty-five and older populous. His opinions can sometimes be extreme but his questions are on target with what a gamer is thinking.*

**Ebola2:** *A man with gaming views and opinions that align well with the typical gamer. He brings reality back after Doodi and Bliznot fall victim to off topics.*

**Bliznot:** *Often sarcastic attitude towards gaming and life in general (and anything doodirock says). Bliznot is there to break the seriousness with some off the wall topic of conversation that may make you say "wtf?" and spit your cola all over the keyboard.*

**Episode 22 ("too tired to cast")** covered some of the new site enhancements that were rolled out over the last month. As many know, the [2old2play.com](http://2old2play.com) website was down for a re-facing and feature enhancement April 1st weekend, and Doodi took the time to cover some of the changes to the site in episode 22.

**Episode 23 ("short and sweet")** unleashed the news about 2old2play hitting the road for E3. The cast and crew will be heading, by car, to E3 for a week of media blitz. Doodi said the trip will involve uploading video and audio back to the site as often as he can to give all of us a glimpse into the E3 frenzy!

**Episode 24 ("Pre E3 Show")** just released on iTunes! The trio gets in-depth with the Nintendo "Wii" console name and predicts their presentation at E3. Ebola2 hopes to see Sony fail horribly, while Bliznot is willing to jump ship from *World of Warcraft* if the MMO *Vanguard: Saga of Heroes* lives up to its hype.

Does Microsoft care about "Wii" and Nintendo's recent publicity? Or are they drawing down on Sony in hopes to crush the PS3?

What do the guys think Microsoft is going to pull from their bag of tricks at E3?

What games will Nintendo's "Wii" be presenting as playable demos? Will it be another 'kids' game? Will the controller ("wand") have force feedback? Will the controller be durable and sustain damage from excessive "playing with your wand"? Is the name "Wii" for real or is it Nintendo using a viral marketing ploy?

Also in this episode: site news, new tournament software in development, and the new Counter Strike server available now!

You can obtain these podcasts on [www.2old2play.com](http://www.2old2play.com) for free by clicking on the episodes directly on the homepage, or through iTunes. If you're new to podcasts, you can download episode 1 through episode 23 from iTunes.

If you would like to ask the team a question you can leave a message at (733) 527-2961.



# Weekend Rentals

## Games worthy of your weekend

### Gladius

by LucasArts

**B**attle with deadly weapons and powerful magic as you learn vital combat tactics to enhance and customize your own characters. Strategies are nearly endless, with 16 character classes and over 100 unique character types from which to choose.

#### Price to Play:

Ebay: \$4.99 to \$12.00

Amazon: \$15.00 to \$30.00.

#### Single Player Aspect...

This game is fun; however, it takes about an hour or so to become comfortable with the interface and a bit longer to understand all the other details involved with the campaign. Although *Gladius* has a bit of a learning curve, I found it to have a uniqueness that compelled me to strive for the end goal.



Before I wrote the review, I decided to pop it in my Xbox again and got instantly drawn in by the game play and interesting story line that had originally captured my attention. I found it hard to put down the controller even though I'd completed this game before.

The battle structure is a refreshing change from the normal ho-hum you find in most every other game in the genre. The control you have over some of the attack damage is really interesting and you are rewarded when you achieve some split-second button pushes via 'hit meters' that are used to judge inflicted damage.

*Gladius* is a well done RPG set in a Roman-like world full of arenas and gladiators to fill your school. It challenges you to use a consistent amount of strategy and gives you enough time to think about your moves beforehand, similar to a chess game.

The actual game play for arena fighting is really the game's core. You will find yourself playing many arena challenges simply to earn your school more respect. It is dependent on your skill at setting your 'team' in a capable attack formation and having your plans come to fruition when you successfully take out the opposing school.

You have shops at each city that are fairly well stocked with a nice assortment of armor, weapons, and other goodies. The items come with different affinities that add bonuses to your gladiators if the affinities match the fighter. Some of the affinity



powers are really cool and can be used at crucial times in battle, such as when the other team's bear is about to pummel our archer with some up-close claw attack. Some of these powers are flat out splendid to watch.

Eventually you will end up with a school numbering fifteen or more skilled warriors. If you do not like the way one of your fighters is performing you can sit him out for a few matches or boot him entirely and hire a new recruit. This level of control is extremely fulfilling, and helps tie the arena matches in with the storyline.

The skills of your gladiators are purchased with job points they gain every time they level up. The skills vary widely depending on the different job classes. This is one of the best features of *Gladius* because it ensures no two warriors on your team are exactly alike. The skills are extremely handy when a situation arises where having a three-hit combo instead of a two-hit combo becomes the deciding factor on an important victory.

My only gripe concerns the lack of multiplayer and perhaps some of the repetitive dialog during arena battles. *Gladius* takes, on average, 40 to 50 hours to complete. I would recommend renting it to see if you enjoy it, then look for a cheap copy online.

#### Multi Player Aspect...

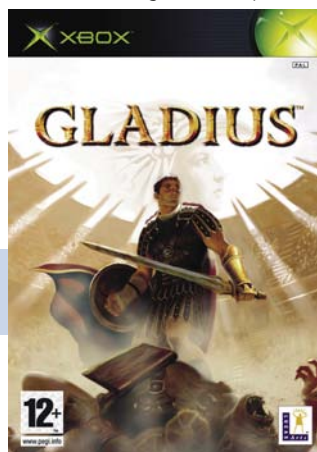
None, unless you count the hours of enjoyment me and my wife had staying up late taking turns advancing through the game. If you count shared gaming time with a loved one, multiplayer is outstanding! There is no Live play, but you can take on a friend in local arena battles.

#### Windup...

I give props to Lucas Arts for putting out such a fun game. I have been salivating for a sequel, which I am fairly sure is not slated for release due to lack of public enthusiasm. It's too bad, too. I really had some of my best gaming experiences playing *Gladius*. Perhaps one the best things about this game is that there are really no other titles quite like it.

Score for purchase: 8/10

Score for rental: 9/10



**XSSMOKE**



**Dear Mike,**

*Why is the sky blue? and... Are we there yet? and... If a tree falls in the forest, and no one's around to hear it fall, does anyone really give a shit?*

**Fetal**

**Dear Fetal,**

The sky is blue because... well, who gives a shit?

Good question! No dumbass, we're not there yet. If we were there we'd have plenty of booze, strippers and lots of 'pleasure.

What's with you and your nature questions? Have you been hugging trees again? NEXT!?!?!?!

**Dear Mike,**

*What was the inspiration for the "drunkfest" that you hold so often???*

**wardividedunity**

**Dear wardividedunity,**

The drunkfest started when *2old2play* started. Many of us used to stay up at night and get drunk anyways. With the influx of new members to the site, I decided it was a good way to get the newer people involved in the site.

**Dear MikeJames,**

*If you could have PhreaksxB1tch do one thing to you, what would it be? Think long and hard on this one!!*

**Lbsutke**

**Dear Lbsutke,**

I LOVE this question. For many of you that don't know Phreaks-Bitch / Twistedcaboose has this crush on me. I have told her many times that I'm married and her wildest dreams will never come true. So, what would I do with PhreaksBitch if I could? I'd probably take her out to dinner and gently explain to her that I'm married. I appreciate all the flirting she does with me and she is a great girl, but for now, I just can't do the kinky things that she wants me to do.

**Dear MikeJames,**

*Do you ever get that "not so fresh" feeling? and... How do I get potatoes out of my toilet?*

**Liger117**

**Dear Liger 117,**

Yes, I do occasionally get the "not so fresh" feeling. Usually it's after a hard night of drinking and looking at porn. I wake up feeling all naughty and disgusting but nothing so bad a shower doesn't handle.

Now, I have no idea what you'd be doing with potatoes in your toilet, but what I would try is purchasing an M80. Light it, toss it in the toilet and run. Please report back with your results. (I'm not responsible for any injuries from stupid actions)

**Dear Mike,**

*My cat has a thread sticking out of its ass, its long, about 5", do I pull it out, or let nature take its course? how long could it be?*

**Bodaget**

**Dear Bodaget,**

Start pulling on the string. Pull fast and furious. The faster the better. If the cat screams, your doing it right. It's just a sign that the cat is enjoying it and you're getting rid of the string. I don't know how long it can be, for heavens sake, it's a stupid cat! How long is your tampon strings anyways?

**Dear Mike,**

*Is it possible for me to be any more awesome than what I already am?*

**goodolplumber**

**Dear GoodOIPlumber,**

Yes, it is possible to be more awesome than you are. Look at it this way, you are on the higher portion of the low end of the awesomeness scale. Someone like King Drewsky is somewhere in the middle of the awesomeness scale. Doodi is at about the lower portion of the high end of the awesomeness scale. Myself, I'm at the very peak of awesomeness. Therefore, you're just one step up from utter shitbag.

## Feedback

I just took a look at it and it looks great! Nice work.

MajorNelson

Awesome job on the first 2o2p mag! Wanted to let you know that it looks incredible and had a ton more content than I expected on its maiden voyage.

Tait

Very nice issue. However, it could have used more cowbell... and more boobies.

DanLeCrinque

The mag kicks much ass, me likey likey.

Caesar

VERY NICE!!! No Probs with the download just some BOOBIES

Armedzero

I didn't know you could pack so much awesomeness into one place.

Liger117

Great start on your mag. Keep it up... and I got a kick as to the article of the profile and the questioned asked "why did u join *2old2play*?" That is a no brainer... because we wanted a decent place to play with out the Bull crap. (and the fact we can't beat that 11 year old.)

Keep up the good work... love this stuff...!!!!!! And if any one



## Feedback (Continued)

plays anything on the old Xbox besides *Halo 2* drop me a line with "new game" as the subject.

ttfn

More MikeJames! Bitches!

MikeJames

I don't really have any problems with it I enjoyed it all. I really liked the "You Blogged This" section I feel that it gives the blog section more life than ever. It gives everyone in the community more of insight what others think.

Boobies would be nice to...

goodolplumber

The first issue was great. My tag is Whamolla and I'm new to the scene, but I'm glad to be a part of the *2old2play*. I would certainly like to contribute even if it's just in the form of some ideas.

Whamolla

Nice job on the magazine. I didn't have any download problems and thought the amount of content was impressive. Also, I agree that some boobies would be like icing on the cake.

BOOBIES!!!

ToddTheBarber

Loved the first edition magazine. I thought it was well put together, and a good read. (I admittedly skipped some stuff). I don't know how you went about selecting what to put in there, and maybe you have enough people contributing, but if you ever start running out of material, feel free to turn me loose.

FadelIntoBlack

*I actually expect people to skip stuff. The goal is to get as much variety as possible so that there is a little for everyone. You know people also skip stuff in Playboy and Maxim? Yeah, believe it or not some people skip the pictures to read the articles (i.e. girls). This is a note to everyone, we always can use writers. If you have a subject you excel at, feel strongly about, or you just want to write something then I'm ready to have you aboard. If you want to write but have no clue what to write about then I'll send you some topics to pick from and we can go from there. This goes out to all readers that want to contribute.*

*This magazine is based on community and without it you'd have 10 pages of codemonkey rants. That would suck bad.*

Awesome job on the mag. I can't believe how talented, versatile and dedicated you guys are. Just wow. Well enough w/the accolades... I did have one comment about the mag. I was just noticing that the font/spacing throughout was a bit troubled throughout. Something happened on page 28, cuz the font/spacing whatever turned out perfect, in my opinion and then the same spacing thing happened at the end of the mag.

It's my opinion that that spacing/font/format (whatever it is on pg. 28 and at the end) is easier to read and more pleasing to peruse than the former spacing.

You may want to get more comments on this, I just felt like sharing.

I'm read every page and article while I was at work, LOL! Anyway... again... great job. Especially w/the variety, graphics,

good writing, putting it all together, etc.

Looking forward to the next installment.

Puzzled

*Thanks Puzzled, I'm sure the team appreciates it. As for what was different on page 28: the font size. I argued font size 12 was better because we're all aging gamers, but Lunatikx said that font size 10 would be better. Turns out he was probably correct because page 28 was font size 10 while the rest was NOT. So expect this issue to be a slightly more comfortable font size.*

I am very new to the *2old2play* forum. I am also very new to gaming. I also have to tell you that I am 60 years old. I am in the *2old2pwn* clan and am enjoying getting to know everyone in that Clan.

I just downloaded the Magazine today... assuming it would probably be 5 or 6 pages of worthless crap... that you usually find when someone on a forum tries to put together a newsletter or magazine... WOW WAS I BLOWN AWAY!!!!

Forty five pages of great interesting interviews, reviews... and stuff. I am very impressed... and the quality of the graphics are first class. Just wanted to let you know.

The only thing I can think of that I was looking for and didn't see was information on the different Clans. Since I am a new person here it might have been interesting to see a bit of news on the different clans... since I don't know anything about the other clans.

Keep up the great work.

Lee1945

*Thanks Lee1945, a few of the folks on the editing team have mentioned the concern with lack of Clan "support" in the magazine as well. Although issue #2 was pretty full, future goals is to spotlight one or two clan's each month and talk with a few of the members and see if we can expose what they do and why to the public. We can also advertise any open slots they have for new members.*

First off, nice job everyone! I really enjoyed the first issue. The only thing I can see to tweak, is the way it reads. I had to scroll down, then back up for the next column. Is this because you meant for people to print, then read? our printer is on the blink, so I had to read it on my laptop.

Thanks for your time.

DedJeloC

*The easiest thing to do (depending on your monitor quality and or eyesight) is to try to zoom out a bit to get as much information on the screen as possible. After experimenting with some "wide screen" layouts it actually makes the problem worse (except now you scroll horizontally rather than vertically). If you can print it, that's great. However most of us don't have enough ink to burn through for the magazine. Hopefully in the future we can put it in really glossy print for all to see.*

## Feedback (Continued)

More cowbells and boobies!

There was an amazing amount of content, I hope you don't plan on doing that every month. Unless you are hoping for paying subscriptions. If so see above, but definitely with the latter.

It will be interesting to see what the next issue looks like.

swooshdave

*Well many people were wondering how we'd get more content for issue #2 with all that stuff from issue #1 to display. Fact is, we got more submissions than I can even squeeze into issue #2 so some are going into issue #3.*

More BOOBIES!!! Easy to download at home, blocked at work. Content was great!! Although there was a lot of it. Not use to nothing but articles. ;- ) I have horrible grammar and spelling skillz so I could not tell if their was any problems.

More BOOBIES!!!!

How about having a Tourneyment section with the results of the sites many tourney's!! That would be cool.

More BOOBIES!!!!!!!

lbsutke

*I believe I have a few people that might want to do some news updates from tournaments, maybe even as a monthly column. The boob issue, we'll that was in high demand, but if you really want to see what Lunatikzx came up with for "boobs" you will not be happy (they involved the word 'man').*

What a great magazine. There was an amazing amount of content. Great job. I don't know how you are going to keep it up every month with that much stuff though. The amount of content wasn't a bad thing... I just want to know if that's how it's going to be every month.

ken71

*I too was wondering how many people I was going to have to harass for content for upcoming issues. As it turns out a "community" magazine requires very little effort from the community itself because if 10% of our site contributes one article a month I've got a 70 page magazine. I started by picking out bloggers and asking them to write some stuff for the magazine and then once issue #1 had a few hundred downloads I was getting e-mail requests daily for contributions. Hopefully we can keep up the momentum.*

It looked really good! Just a couple of really little things. Even page numbers go on the left hand side, not right. So if that was a printed mag, page one would start on a right hand page. The drop shadows and stuff were really cool, but I was having a problem getting page loads. It would load the drop shadows and then it would take another 20 seconds to load the actual part that I wanted to read.

Lunatik did an amazing job with the graphics. Way to go man! and I loved Bat's MC.

Its amazing how many talented graphic artists/artists we have on the site. Are you going to highlight different ones each month? Because that would be a cool way to show off how much talent there is on this site.

Good work. you must have spent a ton of time on it and it shows. You made a great product.

LadyisRed

*There are actually more print issues than the page numbers, and we're not sure how/when we're going to address them yet (you'll know what I mean when you see our new section sidebars in this issue). If future editions "go to print" for real we'll be preparing them to look 100% correct. Hopefully our new design will solve your drop-shadow issues (I noticed it on a few pages as well).*

*I have a limited supply of illustration artists, but as new ones send me mail I'm stashing their names and e-mails in my record database (fancy word for Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet). Darth Wesker, a 2old2play member, sent me his sample design works and its more than impressive. I've got BatmanKM and Darth Cestual working stuff on this issue and we've got a new designer to assist Lunatikzx who goes by Broken Design (you'll see his name in the credits). As long as they all volunteer to design artwork and illustrations I'll be accepting their help!*

I really loved the mag. I even got it on my PDA. Now I can read it on the way to work.

One thing that might make it feel like a real magazine is ads. I know terrible idea, but what if the ads were banners 1/8th of the page tall. They could be for the different game nights. EG: Monday race night, Tuesday COD2 night and so forth. That would be seven little "ads" you could spread around the magazine.

They wouldn't be too intrusive and they would raise awareness of the game nights. Keep up the great work guys.

zorbs

Issue one completely rocked. I agree that some "ads" would break up the space a bit. Beyond just the game night deals, you could also have "sidebars" that show features of the site.

As far as magazine layouts go, I like Wired. They have a ton of content too, but they break it up well. If you get enough of the graphics savvy folks to each make up a few ads of some sort, you'll always have a good supply of them. I can do a couple myself - I do them at work all the time for my websites.

But, all that aside, issue one was an amazing success. Well done, and I know it's only going to get better and better.

trupundit

*So what you guys are telling me is you...want...ad's? I guess the theory is true, you want what you don't have. We'll work on getting 2old2play relevant ad's, however I do not think its going to be for issue #2. I would love to get real ad's too if we can get someone to pay us to get this thing to be printed on real glossy paper. We'll start small and wish.*

## A look into the world of a casual gamer

**P**lease allow me to introduce myself, I'm a man of wealth and fame... ok, maybe that's not the best way to get this section off the ground, but it seemed fitting that I use the lyrics from an old song to describe my place in this world of video gaming.



One thing I've learned over the years is that a good gamer name can make or break you on the virtual battlefield. Lester Ziggs has not always been my tag. Up until a year ago I was known to many by another name.

I first began playing online multiplayer games back in the day when *Delta Force* was all the rage. I logged into the online world for the first time not knowing anything about this brave new world of virtual combat. I found a server and jumped in.

Running my online character around a corner, I spot the enemy and I pull the trigger... dropping his body to the ground. Oh the joy I had from that kill! But alas the joy soon turned to humiliation when many from that server started calling me a newbie.

It turns out that upon my enemy's death a line of text appeared onscreen that read... *Blackhawk killed WeaponX.*



Who the hell was this Blackhawk? Why in gods name were all these people screaming at me for not having my own unique name? Did I get in over my head with this online gaming?



This Weapon X took me aside and then told me I needed to create an online persona for the game... So my quest to find a name had begun. I thought long and hard. Should I use my real name I asked him? He then asked me if I was really that stupid...

Looking back maybe I was.

Later that evening after having downed about two pots of coffee my colon began to call out for some relief. I grabbed my *DF1* player manual and headed to the can for some much needed reading time.



After fifteen or so minutes my oldest son, who was 7 at the time, comes to the door and asks me if I'm ok. I told him everything was good and I'd be out in a few minutes. There was a moment of silence followed by a few noises being made on my end when the kid asks one more question.

"Daddy... What's that grunting noise?"

And thus my first ever game name was born. I shall be known as Grunt. Many always thought I used that name for various military reasons... now you know the truth.

R.I.P. Grunt

# Tank Reports

## Straight from the front lines



### 360 to get new Processors in 2007

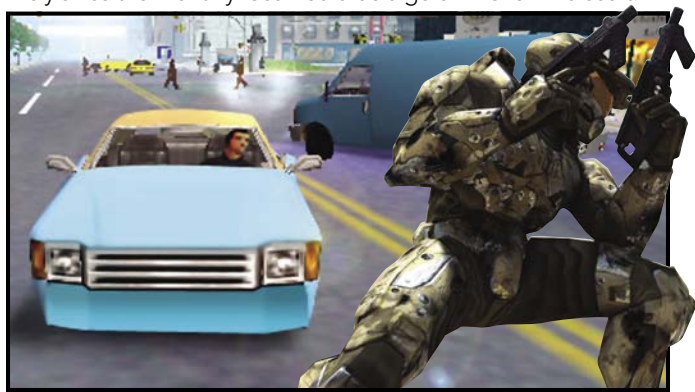
Chartered has signed an agreement with Microsoft to produce the 360 processors using 65 nanometer technology. Going from 90 nanometer in current 360's to 65 nanos means smaller, cheaper and cooler running processors. This may help reduce the fan noise in the 360 by spinning them slower or removing one.

Source Link:

<http://news.teamxbox.com/xbox/10754/Chartered-to-Manufacture-65nm-Xbox-360-CPU's/>

### Rumors: Halo and Grand Theft Auto

Game Informer is standing behind their April story saying that Halo 3 will be called *Forerunner*. They also have revealed that Bungie with the help of Ensemble Studio's is creating an FPS MMO game in the *Halo* universe. Given the following of *Halo*, I think an MMO is likely since the monthly fees would be a goldmine for Microsoft.



Also apparently Microsoft is trying hard to secure an exclusive *Grand Theft Auto* title or at least have a delay between the 360 version and its launch on other platforms. *GTA* is also a game with a huge following, it will sell consoles if Microsoft can secure that exclusive.

Source Link:

<http://www.xboxic.com/news/654>

### Gears of War pushed back

Looks like this blockbuster title has hit another roadblock, perhaps a strategic one. The EBGames release schedule lists *Gears* as 11/1/06 now, which is also the date listed for all the PS3 games. The PS3 may launch around this time and Microsoft is left without a *Halo*3 trump card. So they may have done the next best thing and pushed *Gears* off to November to try and steal some Sony thunder.

Source Link:

<http://www.planetxbox360.com/index.php?view=article&article=1177>



### The Lord of the Rings: Battle for Middle Earth

The summer months are usually pretty light on releases (especially good ones), so I'm surprised to see *Battle for Middle Earth* listed as a July launch. This is the first (or maybe 2nd if you count *The Outfit*) RTS game for the 360. Generally RTS games on the Console don't do well, although there have been some amusing attempts in the past. EA is designing this around a 1 button-does-all scheme. From game play videos and interviews I've seen, this game looks really promising. Between *BFME* and the *Huxley* MMO, your summer gaming should be covered.



Single player look at *BFME*:

<http://features.teamxbox.com/xbox/1547/The-Battle-for-MiddleEarth-II-The-Campaigns/p1/>

### 360s For Everyone

Taiwanese Manufacturer Winstron Corp, which was the 3rd plant to come online to make 360s, is ramping up to pump out 1 million boxes a month. Microsoft is planning on taking full advantage of the year-plus-head start it has over Sony. It'll be interesting to see what happens at Christmas this year IF the PS3 launches this November.

Source Link:

<http://www.gamesindustry.biz/news.php?aid=16197>



### Easy 360 to PC HDD Backups

Datel, which has launched a number of useful and not-so-useful 360 upgrades, may have a winner with the XSATA. This installs between your 360 and your HD and has a USB plug on the back. This turns your 360 HD into a USB drive for your computer WITHOUT MODIFICATION or having take anything apart or do funky wiring with adapters. This is truly a 'for dummies' solution. With the included software, you can copy your 360 HD data onto your PC hard drive for backing up or sharing saved games or what ever. It also works the other way, you can copy 360 files off your PC hard drive to your 360 HD. If you have any worries at all about losing data due to a crash, you should read more about this product.

Source link:

[http://us.codejunkies.com/news\\_reviews.asp?c=US&cr=USD&cs=\\$&r=0&l=1&p=8&i=8990&s=8](http://us.codejunkies.com/news_reviews.asp?c=US&cr=USD&cs=$&r=0&l=1&p=8&i=8990&s=8)



### NYKO's GameFace Faceplit kit

Nyko has come out with a number of unlicensed but useful 360 products, and GameFace is their latest offering. This faceplate has 3 layers, the solid back plate which connects to the 360 faceplate area, then there's a paper insert area and then a clear coat snap-on face. This lets you design and print your own faceplates and change them out at next to no cost. The kit comes with 6 pre-printed designs and 15 blank templates so you can unleash your creative side and make your own. Since faceplates costs \$10-\$300 to swap out, Nyko has come up with a great way to do it very inexpensively.

Source link:

<http://news.teamxbox.com/xbox/10728/Nyko-Ships-Customizable-Faceplate-Kit-for-Xbox-360/>



### Quick Charging is finally here

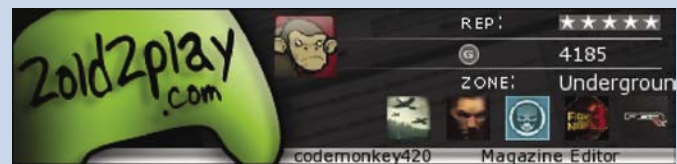
In late April, Microsoft will launch the one launch accessory that got bumped back, the quick charge kit. This adapter will let you plug the NiMH wireless controller battery packs into it and charge off the wall power. There are spots for 2 battery packs and it charges 1 pack in 2 hours, 2 packs in 4 hours (which by today's standards isn't quick in my opinion, but it's faster than the play and charge gadget). You can also safely leave your packs in the charger since it will shut off current to the fully charged packs. The kit comes with the charger, 1 battery pack and the wall adapter. Microsoft is also expected to announce additional accessories at E3 that will utilize the controller battery packs.

Source link:

<http://hardware.teamxbox.com/reviews/xbox-360/57/Xbox-360-Quick-Charge-Kit/p1/>



### 2old2play Signature Contest



Do you have an eye for art? Do you want to contribute back to the community? We're calling all 2old2play members that want to try their hand at some artwork for forum signatures.

The signature images are great ways to show off your gaming Xbox 360 score on message forums around the world. The signatures promote your gamer skills and the 2old2play website so we can use your help!

The signature generation tool, that is now available on 2old2play.com by clicking the Sig Creator button on the 2old2play homepage, is a custom software package written specifically for members of our site. The software is also open for the general public to assist us in promoting 2old2play.com and its community.

Rules and Regulations can be found on the 2old2play Announcement forum. Those that want to contribute must email their contributions to [admin@2old2play.com](mailto:admin@2old2play.com) by May 30th to be accepted into the contest. Winners will have their custom designs made available in the 2old2play signature creation tool for everyone to use.

A big thanks goes out to Derek Nolan (DSmooth) for putting in the hard work to make this software package available to everyone. He designed the signature creation software from the ground up for the benefit of the 2old2play community.

Contribute and be heard.

We're looking for YOU to make a difference.

CodeMonkey

# You Blogged This!

## First game that made you want to toss your controller

Good topic. Maybe *Mike Tyson's Punch-out* while fighting Tyson. He was a cheap bastard.

CALI, New Jersey

*R.C. Pro Am*. That one car that would get a lap ahead that you could not do anything about.

SirPoonga, WI

I was playing Chung Lee in *Street Fighter* while my cousin was playing Blanka. I went for a super spinning kick just as his cheap ass lit himself up with electricity. We both had only enough health for one last shot and I was hit by that stupid electrical cheapness. It was then I threw the controller to the floor and stomped my foot... on a nail (don't ask why I had a nail sticking through the side rails of my bed, long story). A few hours in the emergency room would stop it from bleeding. However, to this day when it's humid I can still see the line that goes almost to the Achilles tendon.

CodeMonkey, New Hampshire

That was the beauty of the NES controllers. They were pretty resilient, so when you tossed them full speed at the wall they would still work. *Contra* caused me enough frustration to launch my controller across the room on many occasion. The NES Advantage was a different story. I was always afraid it would either put a large hole in the wall or would shatter into a million pieces. So I kept a regular controller next to me for those oh-so-frustrating moments.

Technically, *Shamus* was the first game that caused me serious grief, but I couldn't very well pick up my Atari 800 and throw it across the room...

Brainwave0, Oklahoma City, OK

*Mega Man*. I don't think I was able to finish any of those games.

KingDrewsky, Deland, FL

1942 for NES without a doubt. I was like on level 2 (I believe it counted down from 100... if not I was on level 99) and I just couldn't finish the game... I had been playing for hours upon hours, my thumb was in soooo much pain (curse you Nintendo and your d-pad) it wasn't helping me. I can not remember the reason, but I had to stop playing... so in frustration that I spent so much time on the game and I was not going to beat it (curse you Capcom, no save or pass code feature), I threw the controller at the wall and destroyed it!! Then I ran to my room crying!!

Five by Five

I broke several controllers playing *Kid Icarus* and *Solomon's Key* I know. I played some weird and obscure games... oh wait... I did get quite irate while playing *Snafu* and *Happy Trails* on the Intellivision

amatwrestler, Marietta, OH

*Ninja Gaiden* for Xbox without a doubt. That game is friggen insanely difficult. What boggles my mind is that they didn't think it was hard enough, so they added even more enemies into the levels in *Ninja Gaiden Black*...

LB75Player

*Ikari Warriors*... I could never finish that damned last level... What the hell was I supposed to do to finish it?

*Kid Icarus*... I simply turned off the machine and carefully placed the cartridge back into the rental case. *Bionic Commando*... No save points?? What the @&#\*?? It took me all day to get to the end, the last level and at 4am I was far too sleep deprived to do sh\*t.

*Double Dragon 3*... What the hell? The first two were fun and playable... what sadist programmed that sh\*t?

*Kung Fu*?? I think that was the name. It was just a side-scrolling action fighter where you fought on one level against your opponent, and between opponents there was a level where bottles were thrown at you at various heights. So many more, so little memory that I can remember...

NorthernPlato, Sudbury Ontario, Canada

I'm gonna be the most hated person of on site. *HALO 2*. This game requires too much devotion, too much addictiveness, too much buttons combination and too much network speed. I literally killed one of my controllers, that is why people ain't seen me playin *Halo 2* no more. I'm pissed about that game... I HATE it. I wont pass 365 days a years practicing a game just for the fun of it... I will still play *Halo*... NOT TOO MUCH though...

AND NO MORE DAMN MATCHMAKING

Lunatik-ZX, Quebec

*Keystone Cops*. That little Bastid crook would get sooo damn fast on later levels and all those damn radios in the way with bouncy balls... I still get a tinge of frustration thinking about it. Not to mention if you should get to the top first the bastid would double back in the elevators. Modern programmers of AI should revisit that game. That crook is an a\$\$h@#%.

As far as pvp games that would be combat, my older brothers would kill me fast in every variation tanks, biplanes, and jets!

thebrigade, San Clemente, Orange County, CA

I'd have to agree 100% with my fellow clanmate LB75Player, *Ninja Gaiden* definitely caused me to create a plethora of new 4 letter words. After about 3+ months I was finally able to beat it nevertheless to find out that *Black* came out to make me say Uncle again. In short, *Ninja Gaiden* on the Xbox has to be the most insanely difficult game on that platform.

For the PS2, that same difficulty honor goes to *Devil May Cry 3*. I've been a longstanding Capcom and *DMC* fan and this 3rd series made me more pissed than that crazy *Halo 2* Croyt guy on LIVE. Although not as punishing as *Ninja Gaiden*, *DMC 3* definitely made me wonder if these developers are messing with us.

xenaDRINEx76

Sega? Nintendo? I know I'm one of the younger folk, but no one else broke the stick right off their Atari controller playing *Defender*? Those goddamn humans on the ground... friggin run around or something, buy me some time to get to you instead of just standing there!! Sorry. Had a flashback and broke my mouse.

TaxiSquad27, Rugged lands of Shaolin, NY

*Tomb Raider*, Arghhh! *Midnight Club 2* beating those darn motorbikes (did I mention I can't race for blam lol)

joyceey, redcar in north east England

## You Blogged This! (Continued)

I got mad at plenty of games, but none aggravated me more than *Stryder* on the Sega Genesis. Especially the centipede boss that you had to keep jumping on his back to keep from falling. My Mom used to come in my room and threaten to whip my ass if I didn't stop yelling and flinging the controller.

Corcki, Providence, RI

So many games... one game that comes to mind is *Sonic The Hedgehog* for the Genesis. If you wanted to beat the game you had to play from start to finish all in one sitting. I could never do it. On the Playstation... *Tomb Raider III*, I got to a point that I could not figure out what the heck to do and have given up ever finishing that game.

Jett\_Fuel, Lakewood CA

*Metroid* I couldn't beat the first boss and it took for EVER to get to him. At least it did when I was a kid. Man do I hate that game to this day stupid Samus b####h.

NightShadow97, Northern Indiana

A LOT of games have made me hurl controllers but the last one that I can remember making me furious was *Final Fantasy X*. There was a mini game where you had to ride a chocobo over a timed course. If you ran over a balloon they took off 2 seconds and if you got hit by a bird, it added two seconds. You had to finish the course with a total time of 0:00:00 to get the main character's most powerful weapon. I played that DAMN mini game for about 12 hours. When I finished with 0:00:01 and got nothing. I threw that controller as far as I could, then I threw the game disc as far as it would go. I was a loyal *FF* fan but I will not buy another game in that series. Just thinking about that mini game still pisses me off.

DubbleORedneck

*Halo 2*... I never really had any problems with single player games... Live has opened up new worlds of rage to me. The funny thing is the times that I get frustrated with myself are usually the times that I accidentally left Azureus my peer to peer downloading program on my computer. It's probably sucking up 70 kb/s of my bandwidth leaving me little to nothing to play on. I have to stop doing that.

Darksage, Langley AFB

Hi, my name is Mister Bling, and I'm a 'thrower.' I'm in recovery, and have gone almost a full year without throwing a controller. The last time I 'threw' was after college, and I was playing *Gameday 98* on the PS1. Last game of the season, I was the Broncos, playing the Oilers. Undefeated season so far, 15-0, then as time expires, Warren "Wife-Beater" Moon airs out an 80-yard load of bullshit and connects to a WR who was triple-covered in the end zone. Other than no cats to scurry away from the debris, the results were similar. I remember when I moved out of that house, and found the triangle button.

Then there was *Street Fighter II Turbo*. NES controllers were sturdy, but so were SNES controllers. They made more 'rattling' noise after a couple of throws, as the internal plastic casing seemed to break apart easier, but I never had a button pop out, and I still own my two original SNES controllers, and they still work fine.

MisterBling, Dallas, TX

The first time I ever played Pong and lost was when I threw my first controller. I then moved on to *Tron Deadly Disc* on the old Intellevision system. That game used to piss me off when the orange guys would come out. Well I take that back any game for that console used to piss me off. Any more I want to throw my controller up against the wall anytime a Timmy gets online and starts running his damn mouth about how bad I suck compared to his L33T Skillz.

I think I have broke more mic's that way because of them, my original mic was slammed into the floor pretty hard I could only hear but not talk. So then I used my cell phone hands free set as my Xbox mic and wound up throwing it up against a wall and shattering it into a million pieces.

But recently I just don't use a mic during MM unless I have a reliable team to play with.

Goodolplumber, Muldrow, OK

I would have to agree *Ninga Gaiden* caused me to throw my controller more than once. The pink bitch Alma caused me to have to buy a new controller. DAMN HER!

soonermagic78, Paoli, Oklahoma

The question should be which game didn't make you throw your controller lol.

For me I didn't get frustrated until I played *Gran Turismo 1* for Playstation. That is where it all started; games like *Ninja Gaiden* and *Goldeneye* and *Contra* were too much fun.

Caesar, St Clair Shores, MI

*Blades of Steel* was a NES hockey game that I loved for the cheesy fights. I lost about 3 or 4 fights in row and I let the handle fly. I also remember *Mortal Kombat* getting me pretty pissed when I would try a finishing combo and my dude would do like a low kick or something stupid.

diskombobul8r, CINCINNATI OHIO

*Zelda: Ocarina of Time*. The water tower took us almost a month to get thru (at a few hours per week), damn thing drove me crazy.

Twistedcaboose, Ohio

I never have been a controller chucker, I have been known to let out screams a frustration, but never thrown controllers, at least not hard. Except for one time. The game was pretty lame, but still fun. *ATV Offroad II* for PS2. I could never get the jumps down and be consistent and the AI riders were always perfect. Make one mistake and you lost the race. So I was trying to beat this one track and after about the 6th attempt I was just so pissed I took the controller by the cord and just smashed it repeatedly on the floor. Just shattered the thing. I still don't feel bad about it either.

Jrod, KC Suburbs (Kansas Side)

Definitely *Ghouls and Ghosts*... then they tried to make it better on the SNES with the double jump... what a crock. The first few levels weren't bad, but after that it was like they didn't want you to beat the game. Makes me sick and ask why.

Orbytal, Renton, WA

How's this? I had a Texas Instruments TI-99 when I was about 4 and after my parents bought the expansion pack for games (it was only a keyboard) I played for months and months. Nothing like getting thousands of feet up Mt Everest only to get hit with a tumbling rock. I don't think I ever made it to the summit.

TORNandTATTERED, CT

# Gamer Profile

## Jean-Philippe "Lunatik" Lambert a.k.a. Lunatikzx

### Where do you live?

Quebec City, Quebec, Canada

### How old are you?

27 years old

### Married, single, kids?

In couples with a really courageous woman

### Occupation, what is it you do for work?

Graphic design contractor trying to find more jobs.

### What is your favorite drink (alcohol or not)?

Good old Canadian beer ( 12 at a time )

### What is your favorite food?

Poutine (pronounced, roughly, poo-TEEN, or peuh-TSEEN) is a popular snack consisting of French fries topped with fresh cheese curds and covered with hot gravy and sometimes other additional ingredients.

### Why did you become 2old2play member, and where did you hear about it?

Because I wanted to meet some intelligent gamers, and heard about it from listening to the podcast that I found on iTunes.

### What is your favorite music band or artist?

TOOL, Philipe Glass, Mike Patton

### What is your favorite gaming genre?

Shooters, action games, Racing, RPG

### If you had a million dollars what would you do with it?

I would buy a big fat desert eagle magnum... NOT

I would pay my debts buy a 360 for me and my brothers and upgrade my PC to something powerful.

### Once Sony PS3, Xbox 360, and Nintendo Revolution are on the market together, who will come out the leader?

I think that the loser will definitely be ps3 and the market will define itself better: Nintendo family console, 360 gamer's console.

### If you had to give a younger kid advice about gaming what would it be?

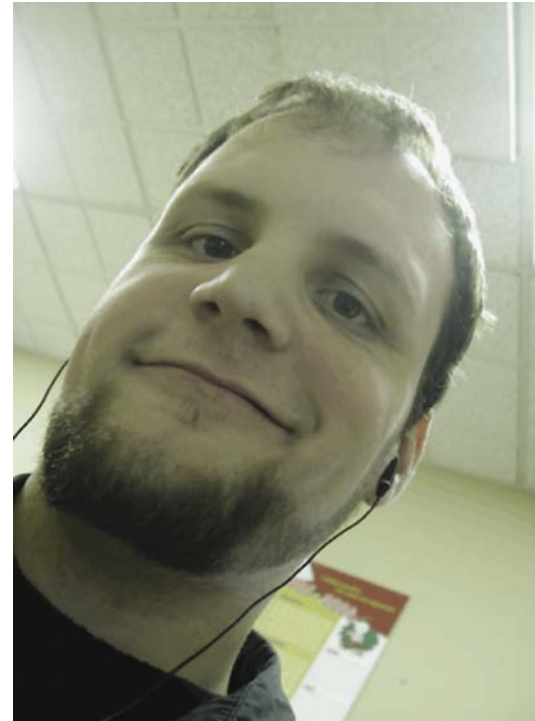
OMFG STFU and try to make your voice more mature with some drano not with voice masking devices, dumbass.

### What video game villain do you believe is the most powerful of them all?

Sephiroth from *Final Fantasy 7* but he's no match for Cloud Strife

### If you were stuck on an island for 6 months and all you had was a console and the choice of either mario paint, super mario, excite bike, legend of zelda (NES), or metroid (NES), which game would you take?

I would take *Metroid*... why? I was able to finish that game with my eyes closed. I would then hide *Zelda* in my pocket and bring that too, because I was a god at that game as well.







# 2old2play Alpha Team Pro Needs Your Help!

Major League Gaming (MLG) is a nationwide professional Video gaming tournament league.

## Who is on this 2old2play MLG team?



**F1R3 (firewtr96) – leader and 1337 strategist**  
**Gaara7 (ken71) – n00b slayer**  
**Clutch (Clutch2) – once pwned your mother**  
**Netw3rk (netw3rk) – uses numb3rs 4 l3tt3rs**

These guys have been playing together for a couple of months and think they can rival the best of MLG... even if the competition is 10 to 15 years younger. They also think that chocolate milk comes from the other end of the cow, which is just wrong on so many levels.

What are they trying to accomplish?

**1. Spread the Word About 2old2play.** We want to open the eyes of the gaming community and make people realize older people are gamers too, and some of them don't suck.

**2. Prove their Worth.** For these rough and rugged fellows, it is not just about just showing up. They want to send a message to the gaming community that just because they are older gamers, that doesn't mean they can't school Timmies for breakfast. These guys aim to cause many a youngster to leave skidmarks in their Fruit of the Looms.

**3. Gain sponsorship.** This 2old2play group wants to show you what they can do as a team. Team is defined as a cooperative unit that works together to prove something; Alpha Team Pro wants to prove they can be #1, but a good team is only as powerful as their funding. Sponsorship is the missing piece for 2old2play Alpha Team Pro.

What can the 2old2play community do to help?

To help them get to their first few MLG tournaments, they are asking for donations and to help them get the word out about their phenomenal skills with the sticky bomb. The team will be holding fundraiser tournaments to help them get the cash they need. Recently, they hosted their first tournament and they were excited by how many people enjoyed getting their asses handed to them and are looking for more teams (aka fresh meat) for upcoming tournaments. See the Halo 2 forums at 2old2play.com for more information on upcoming events.

2old2play Alpha Team Pro will begin offering gaming lessons through the 2old2play site in addition to hosting tournaments. Members interested can receive up-to-date tournament information from the Halo 2 forum, or send a request for information to [Lessons@2old2play.com](mailto:Lessons@2old2play.com).

If you would like to help donate to the 2old2play Pro team, simply click on the "donation" link on [www.2old2play.com](http://www.2old2play.com) and donate with the subject "2o2p Pro team." We thank you in advance!

Thanks,

**2old2play Alpha Team Pro**

[2old2playAlpha@gmail.com](mailto:2old2playAlpha@gmail.com)

\* no n00bs were harmed in the preparation of this announcement, for the most part

## Major League Gaming



"The league, which MLG claims to be the first professional gaming organization, announced several deals that would bring the MLG to the public. The biggest deal involves the broadcasting of seven one-hour episodes of MLG programming on the USA Network. The television shows, which will be available on MLG.com, will air this holiday season."

### GameSpot

<http://www.gamespot.com/news/6147757.html>

MLG has over 95,000 members on their forums.

### mlgpro.com

MLG has just secured \$10 million in financing from Ritchie Capital to build world's first professional video game league.

### mlgpro.com

"NEW YORK CITY—APRIL 17, 2006— Major League Gaming (MLG), the first professional video game league, today announced major sponsorship and programming deals that will catapult professional video gaming into the mainstream. Details of the partnerships include an agreement to air the entire circuit on USA Network, the top-rated basic cable network in America, in seven one-hour long episodes during the holiday season."

[http://www.mlgpro.com/news/MLG\\_To\\_Bring\\_Pro\\_Gaming\\_To\\_the\\_Masses/1.html](http://www.mlgpro.com/news/MLG_To_Bring_Pro_Gaming_To_the_Masses/1.html)

"It may surprise you to know the average age of today's gamer is 30. Additional statistics show 43% of gamers are between the ages of 18 and 49, with 19% over the age of 50. The website itself, 2old2play.com, boasts a membership of over 4000 members over the age of 25. These 4000 members come from all walks of life and play video games from all platforms. There is definitely an untapped market in the older gamer world just waiting to be explored."

### Peter D. Hart

Research Associates



# AGEIA and the PhysX Processor

## A Preview into the Near Future of Gaming

**So much for just having to pay for a graphics card every six months or so to stay on top of your game now you also have to consider the world's first gaming Physics Processing Unit (PPU), the AGEIA PhysX Processor.**

The AGEIA PhysX processor is the first dedicated hardware accelerator for PC games. It enables improved dynamic motion and interaction for a new immersive gaming experience. The PPU calculates all of the movement and interaction in a game; so that graphically-intense games can portray a more realistic "cause and effect." The processor is specifically designed to run physics algorithms, allowing the Computer Processing Unit (CPU) to concentrate on other functions in the game, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). This also allows the Graphics Processor Unit (GPU) on your video card to work specifically on the visual aspects of the game. The result will be an increase in fluidity and, what most PC gamers are concerned about, frames-per-second (FPS).

The PhysX processor calculates the equations of matter and force and their interaction and movement in real-time environments. So this isn't going to make your graphics "pop" or make lighting more realistic. Instead, the PPU will make a floating buoy move like a floating buoy or a puddle of water ripple like a real puddle of water. Gone are the days of canned death scenes or over the top rag doll effects (the effect that makes dead bodies fly across the screen with legs and arms flailing unrealistically). Now a death fall can look like a true death fall. To see some examples of this new technology in short game dem-

os, visit <http://physx.ageia.com/footage.html>. The side-by-side comparison for Ghost Recon is impressive and the Cellfactor demo just plain kicks ass!

Now, buying one of these new bad boys isn't going to turn every game you own into a perfectly fluid work of art, complete with beautiful frame rates and realistic motion. Games have to be programmed with consideration of this new technology; although there has been some speculation recently that games that use the Havok FX physics engine may be patched to use the PhysX processor technology. A few titles that use the Havok engine include, Half-Life 2, F.E.A.R., Age of Empires III, and of course Elder Scrolls: Oblivion. This banter began after an update to [www.havok.com](http://www.havok.com) in the Havok FX FAQ:

### Will Havok FX Support AGEIA?

Havok FX will support hardware that can execute standard OpenGL and Direct3D code at the Shader Model 3.0 level. If the AGEIA card and drivers adopt and support Shader Model 3.0 industry standard, Havok FX support will be possible.

True this statement is vague but it does show a possibility for current games to take advantage of PPU technology.

So, what games are definitely coming out with this new technology in mind, and would I even care to play them? Well the answer to that question finally revealed itself on AGEIA's website: <http://physx.ageia.com/>

As you can see, there are a few "big name" games coming out in the near future that will use this new hardware, namely G.R.A.W. and UT2007. Now, some of you maybe thinking, "Sh\*t, where can

I get this badass new toy?" Right now the only places you're going to find these are in the new Dell XPS 600 series, Alienware Aurora ,or Falcon Northwest Mach V. Unless you want to spend close to \$10,000 USD or more for one of these PCs you'll have to wait for the cards to come out sometime around May 2006. So far, cards have been announced by BFG and ASUS, although very little is confirmed at this time. It looks like they will be PCI cards and priced between \$250-399 USD. BFG has placed specifications, system requirements and even a picture of the new PCI PhysX card on their website <http://www.bfgtech.com/physx/index.htm>, but has yet to announce an official release date or name a price.

The system requirements are not excessive, so it shouldn't be a problem to pick this up as long as you have a machine that was purchased

Title	Developer	Publisher
<b>Available From Now Throughout Spring 2006</b>		
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter	GRIN	Ubisoft
Rise of Nations: Rise of Legends	Big Huge Games	Microsoft Games Studios
Bet on Soldier: Blood Sport	KyloTonn Entertainment	Take Two Interactive
CellFactor	Artificial Studios	Not Announced
City of Villains	Cryptic Studios	NCSOFT
Gunship Apocalypse	FAKT	Software Novitas
<b>Upcoming Titles</b>		
Unreal Tournament 2007	Epic Games	Midway Games
Sacred II	ASCARON	Take Two Interactive
Loki	Cyanide	Focus
Dogtag	DiezelPower Studios	Not Announced
Fallen Earth	Icarus Studios	Icarus Studios
Crazy Machines 2	FAKT	Software Novitas
Arena Online	Game Consulting	Not Announced
Infernal (Formerly Diabolique)	Metropolis Software	Playlogic International
Warhammer MMORPG	Mythic Entertainment	Mythic Entertainment
Eye of the Storm	Yager Development GmbH	Not Announced
KARMA	Quantic Dream	Atari
Vanguard: Saga of Heroes	Sigil Games	Microsoft Games Studios
Alpha Prime	Black Element Software	Not Announced
Abyss Lights: Frozen Systems	Abyss Light Studios	Not Announced
Highlander	Widescreen Games	SCI/Eidos
Dark Basic Pro	The Game Creators	Not Announced
Blink 3D	Pelican Crossing	Not Announced
Fritz Chess 9	ChessBase	Excalibur (UK)



## AGIEA and the PhysX Processor

within the past few years. Those that made the jump to Windows XP64 Pro are out of luck, as there has yet to be any 64-bit driver support announced by AGEIA, ASUS or BFG.

Computer editors/writers are somewhat at odds. Some think it will be the greatest hardware revolution in years, while others envision a complete flop. Recently, at the 2006 Game Developers Conference, NVIDIA and ATI showed off their own version of physics processing using their respective dual-graphics card solutions. While impressive, it makes one of your SLI/Crossfire cards specifically work as a physics processor, which I would think puts a big dent into the high resolution performance that dual-graphics card setups are made for. Then, there is talk of multicore-asymmetrical processors (such as the Cell Processor of the PS3) processing physics along an array of several specific processing cores. Who knows what the future will bring, but, in my opinion, the independent PPU is the way to go. The upgrade cost is relatively low when compared to purchasing an SLI motherboard, a new multi-core processor, or another GPU (or maybe all three depending

on your system's age). With several big publishing companies (namely Ubisoft and Midway) already on board, AGEIA has a chance to really gain a foothold in video gaming physics. Now if they could get some 64-bit driver support I will be picking this bitch up the day I go and buy G.R.A.W.

For those that are die-hard, hardcore, PC gaming enthusiasts, this new hardware is a must have; fluid game play, the ever important FPS boost, and another new piece of hardware to show off through that clear window in the side of their computer case. Oh, and did I mention that 3DMark06 has support for this? Benchmark fans would be interested because of the score boosts alone. At \$250-300 USD, the price may be a little stiff for the mainstream gamer just looking to play a few games with little regard for top-end performance.

Staying on top of the PC gaming technology curve has always been hard (and expensive) but, with the introduction of AGEIA's PhysX Processor, the possibilities it brings, and the sure competition to follow, it may have just become next to impossible.

### Specifications

Processor: AGEIA PhysX  
 Memory Interface: 128-bit GDDR3  
 Memory Capacity: 128MB  
 Peak Instruction Bandwidth: 20 Billion/sec  
 Sphere-Sphere Collisions: 530 Million/sec max  
 Convex-Convex (Complex Collisions): 533,000/sec max  
 Software Included: BFG PhysX Drivers, BFG PhysX Demo DVD

### Minimum System Requirements

CPU with processor speed of 1.4 GHz or higher  
 128MB of RAM  
 Microsoft Windows XP, Home, Pro or MediaCenter Edition  
 CD or DVD-ROM drive  
 20MB available hard disk space  
 A 300 watt system power supply  
 A vacant PCI 2.0 or higher slot  
 Add-in graphics card supporting Microsoft® DirectX® 9.0 Shader Model 2.0 or higher

## DIE75

Cellfactor

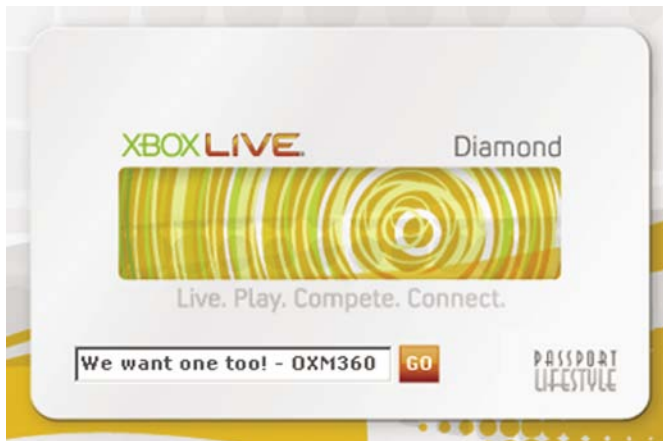


PhysX Processor



# Xbox Live Diamond Card:

## An unprecedented merger of your entertainment activities



If you haven't heard or seen anything about the Xbox Live Diamond Card, then you are probably wondering just what in the hell it is. Well, I'm here to enlighten you, or at least point you in the direction of sources that will.

The essence is this: Microsoft and Xbox Live want to reward you for being such a loyal customer, so borrowing an idea that many grocery stores utilize, they created a free card that you can use to get discounts. The only difference is that with the Diamond Card, you will be able to use it at various retailers, restaurants and stores (both online and in RL), sometimes in addition to a printable coupon, to get said discounts. Not too shabby. But, Microsoft is touting this as "an unprecedented merger of your entertainment activities, both online and offline", and I'm not entirely sure that it will live up to that, but you should be able to save a little scrilla, anyway, and that's always good in my book. Like many Americans, I'm a sucker for the word "free", so as soon as I saw this advertised on xboxlive.com, I signed up. And sure enough, I eventually received my official Xbox Live Diamond Card, with my very own gamertag embossed in its shimmering white plastic. Have I used it yet? No. But I will, once I find that deal that interests me most.

Now I'm sure you want to know where you can use it and what kind of deals are available. Well, I like to eat, so my first order of business was to see what kind of discounts were available in that arena. Unfortunately not that many, but they include some of my favorites, like Papa John's and Quiznos. Most deals in this genre are buy one get one free, but there is also a 20% discount at Garlic Jim's Famous Gourmet Pizza, whatever that is. There is also a buy one get one on select sandwiches at Hardee's. But it's not just food. The vendors really run the whole gamut, from apparel to video rentals to flowers. For us gamers, you may like that you can rent one movie or game and get one free at Hollywood Video or Movie Gallery (somehow, Blockbuster is missing, but maybe that'll change). There are also deals on travel, including luggage and rental cars, tickets to theme parks and movies. Other companies offering discounts or coupons are Ace Hardware, Barnes & Noble and Target, just to name a few.

I could go on and on about the different discounts, which you may or may not deem useful, but I don't want to bore you with a laundry list. So, how about checking it out for yourself here:

<http://www.xbox.com/en-US/live/features/perkscard.htm>.

Then, since it's free and there really is no reason why you shouldn't, go ahead and sign up here: <http://www.xboxlivediamond.com/>. In no time you'll have your very own Xbox Live Diamond Card that you can "flash to your friends" (I know Timmy would do that, but 2o2players? I dunno bout that...lol) and use to keep just a little more money in your wallet or purse. All in all, not such bad perk for a service that we already pay for and enjoy in



Every Monday Night gamers twenty five and older get together on Xbox Live and burn their wheels to find the best in class. Get your 360 in gear with Project Gotham Racing 3 and join a private 2o2d2play room! Do you prefer a more aggressive racing experience then perhaps Burnout Revenge is more your style! Get on the pedal and head over to 2o2d2play.com's forum "Racing Games for the 360."

Meet new people, find a rival, and have some laughs. Racers of all levels can join in the fun without being called a 'n00b' or a 'lamer.' Ranked games will never be the same once you experience a group of gamers that fit you like a five point harness.

To experience the Monday night racing festivities send a private-message to **ZORB**s or hit him up with a friends request via Xbox Live. If enough gamers show up, multiple rooms will be opened to house the crowd.

No designated driver required; cold one by your side and controller in hand - simply hit the gas and go!



# Table Tennis

## Anyone?

**If you're anything like me, you probably had visions of fast cars, guns, scantily-clad women, and explosions when you heard that Rockstar Games was working on a new project.**

Maybe you didn't even know they were working on a new project, but whatever. We now know what that project is, and it's about...ping pong. To those who play on more than just rare occasions, Table Tennis, which lends itself nicely to the name Rockstar Games Presents Table Tennis. Don't you think?

"Ping Pong? Table Tennis? Why?" you may ask. Well, why not? Rockstar has developed games other than the Grand Theft Auto series. Games like Manhunt, The Warriors and both Max Payne games. There are others, many of which really cut their own swath



through the jungle of conventional game premises and development, ignoring the well-worn tracks trod by other developers.

There is no doubt that GTA is what really set them apart, with extreme doses of sex, drugs, violence, and crime in a huge environment. Do what you want, take what you want, go where you want and kill everyone you meet on the way.

So why the sudden change? Did the "Hot Coffee" mod scandal scare them into something with absolutely no repercussions?

Well, it's not hard to imagine that being the case, but I believe it comes down to one thing: fun.



Plenty of games/sports have been developed into video games, but since table tennis isn't on the forefront it is easy to see that it can be overlooked. Without going into great detail it should be known that table tennis has had a World Championship since 1926 and has been in the Olympic Games since 1988. It may be overlooked in games, but many people take it seriously.

Most of us that have played it, even in passing, it is undeniably

fun, regardless if you are any good or not. With Rockstar San Diego at the helm, it's a safe bet the fun inherent in the game/sport (very astute of you to see I am not taking sides!) will transfer smoothly into the video game.

The gameplay environment is confined to two players, the table and the arena, which allows Rockstar to really make the visuals shine. Don't take my word for it. Check out the pictures and videos here: <http://www.rockstargames.com/tabletennis/>.

Will it be any good? I can't say with absolute certainty but I have a really good feeling about it.

When the glorious day arrives and I actually acquire an Xbox 360, I plan on renting this game without a doubt. I haven't played ping...I mean table tennis in ages.

Keep your eyes on the internet for additional reviews, vids and pics in the next month, cause this baby will be hitting shelves on May 23rd.

**TBOX**



Tuesday night is *G.R.A.W* night at [2old2play.com](http://2old2play.com). Do you want to test your merit against the best of the oldies? Are you sick of random groups of people that you would never associate with in real life? Do you want a team that understands that you must logout once in awhile because the kid is crying? 2old2play never leaves a squad member behind!

Do you have the bandwidth to host a big game but far too few people on your friends list play *G.R.A.W*? Send a private-message to **forsaken** or **JohnnyCornholer** and start hosting!

Are you just looking for a good gaming experience on a host with a good connection? Zoom into the 2old2play message forum "*Ghost Recon: AW*" and start meeting new people, send a few friends request, suit up and move out!



# Halo in Xbox Live Marketplace... Why?

## Will fans re-pay for what may be the same old Halo?

**O**ne of my all-time favorite games is rumored to soon be making a splash on the 360 Marketplace – Halo: CE. Wow, so many questions and thoughts come to mind.

If they do bring it to the marketplace, will it be running on an emulator or will it be reworked? Has the secretive project from Bungie been a marketplace version of Halo, with reworked maps and multiplayer adaptations? Will people who haven't played Halo before start playing? So many unanswered questions and since none of my emails have been returned, there's no real answer to have, so, we will speculate.

Let's say it isn't on an emulator and has been completely reworked. That could potentially change the entire game. The 360 doesn't have a killer application, so why not rework a killer app from the old system? Doing this, potentially, gives the 360 a killer app. Make the Live play for the 360 only and watch 360's fly off the shelves, because fans of the Halo world and Halo: CE multiplayer will have to have it.

If it's just the same game, to me it is a waste of time. Why would you put out the same game you can go buy used for \$8.00 (sometimes even \$5) at a pawn shop? Now, some people may not have played Halo before, and it would be easily accessible, but, if you haven't played Halo by now, I seriously doubt you'd spend the marketplace points to download it.

There are about a hundred other questions with a hundred possible conclusions for each. In my opinion, it is a waste of time to put Halo out on the marketplace to have it run on an emulator. Personally, I am hoping it's a rework with multiplayer adaptations. Until it actually happens, I will continue to hope, watch, and read any information I can.

**FireWtr96**



# PlayStation Portable (PSP) Review –

## One Year after Launch

**O**ne of the best memories I share with my son is pulling an almost all nighter to go stand in line to get our PSP on launch night. We grabbed ours and we went home and played away almost until our alarms woke us up for school and work. Since that day, a year ago, the PSP has undergone updates that make it even more versatile. I feel it has become even more attractive to the older gamer demographic.

### Hardware

<b>HEIGHT</b>	0.9 in
<b>WIDTH</b>	6.7 in
<b>DEPTH</b>	2.9 in
<b>WEIGHT</b>	9.2 oz
<b>MEDIA</b>	UMD Universal Media Disc
<b>PROCESSOR</b>	333MHz 128 bit Data Width
<b>RAM</b>	32MB 4MB Cache
<b>DISPLAY</b>	LCD display 4.3 in TFT active Matrix Color Internal 16 to 9 widescreen
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	130,560 Pixels with 24-bit (16.6 million colors)
<b>CONNECTIONS</b>	Headphones / remote control, USB, DC power input, Microphone
<b>WIFI</b>	802.11, and IRDA.
<b>EXPANSION</b>	Memory Stick Duo Pro
<b>AUDIO</b>	Stereo Speakers, Headphones
<b>PRICE</b>	Just dropped to \$199.90 - \$249.00 range. <i>Specifications from ZDnet; www.zdnet.com</i>



### Expand Your Memory

My PSP came with a 32MB Memory Stick Pro. This is plenty for saved games but if you want to put video or music on the PSP you will need to upgrade to a stick with a larger memory capacity. Right now the 1GB Memory Stick Pro is running about

\$70.00 and the 2GB is \$150. At a reasonable video resolution, you can fit two to four movies on a 1GB Memory Stick Pro.

### This Baby Plays Games!

The main reason to buy the PSP is to play games. The game play is presented in beautiful widescreen High Definition (HD) graphics. The PSP is also very ergonomic; I am able to play for hours without getting any sort of hand strain. The size of this device is very close to that of a PlayStation 2 (PS2) controller. The internal stereo speakers have a nice sound but lack the bass ranges that the stock headphones provide.

The game play in most PSP games is smooth and intuitive. When playing a first-person-shooters (FPS), you have to make allowances for the lack of a secondary analog stick. Some games handle this well while others force you into an uncomfortable control scheme. In my opinion this system offers the best in game play of any portable game system on the market.

### The PSP Plays Music

Sony would like the PSP to be the iPod killer but the lack of sufficient memory and an easy way, like iTunes, to get music on the PSP has kept it from being a real contender in that market.

To listen to music you need to have enough space on your memory stick. The PSP Supports MP3, and now with the latest OS update, WMA music formats. If you plan to use Apple's AAC format you will need to convert them to MP3 files first. With out some considerable hacking you will not be able to move any files purchased from the iTunes music store to the PSP. There are two ways to get music on to the PSP. The fastest way for large amounts of music transfer is to copy the files to an mp3 folder on your PC then transfer them via the devices USB 2.0 connection. The second way is to download them directly off of a website using the WiFi connection. A big drawback to the PSP is that you are unable to place music files in folders for organizing. You are also unable to make music play lists. Music sounds great through the stock headphones or other third party headphones. The PSP speakers are too small to throw out much bass. My take on music is – if it isn't something on a website I want to hear while I'm surfing with my PSP – I listen to it on my iPod.

### PSP UMD Movies

Universal Media Disc's (UMD) are basically small CD's in a protective case. UMD movies look and sound great. There is quite a selection of movies. The latest news is that all publishers, with the exception Sony Pictures, are cutting back there UMD releases due to lackluster sales. I feel the reason sales are slow is because it is very easy to put any movie or video on the PSP yourself for free. The movie feature of PSP is probably the second best reason to go out and buy one.

### PSP Video

Other than playing games, putting and watching video on the PSP is a great reason to buy a PSP. Even now, after Apple's Video iPod was introduced, I still prefer the PSP because the Widescreen display is roughly twice the size of my daughter's video iPod.

As is the case with music, there are two ways to get video on the PSP. The first method is to take any MP4 and use the USB interface to copy the files to the video folder on the PSP from your PC. The second method is to download a file directly from a



## PlayStation Portable (PSP) Review – One Year after Launch (Continued)

website via WiFi. TiVo ([www.tivo.com](http://www.tivo.com)) is expected to introduce a TiVo for PSP transfer through the TiVo Desktop this month.

Any movie in your collection can be run through a DVD decrypter ([www.afterdawn.com/software/video\\_software/dvd\\_rippers/dvd\\_decrypter.cfm](http://www.afterdawn.com/software/video_software/dvd_rippers/dvd_decrypter.cfm)) and then modified using a free program called PSP Video 9 ([www.pspvideo9.com](http://www.pspvideo9.com)) to fit on to your memory stick. As mentioned before you can fit two to four movies on a 1GB stick depending on the quality.

You have a variety of screen sizes during playback to customize your viewing along with the usual play, pause, fast forward, rewind controls. The headphone connection also has a small remote that you can use to control your movies along with a volume.

### System Updates

Sony has updated the OS several times since the launch a year ago. Each update brings more functionality. To update your system software you run the Network Update option in the settings menu and your new update is downloaded via WiFi for installation. Updates have increased security, added a web browser, downloadable games to play, and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) stream functionality. Sony's commitment to improving the PSP is commendable.

### Web Browsing

The web browser had become available after the 2.0 network update. The browser looks great and the interface works surprisingly well. You are able to open multiple windows and save bookmarks, etc. The only drawback is that the cache sizes are limited to the PSP's internal 32 MB of memory. When you consider the OS runs on that 32MB as well it doesn't take long to fill the cache memory and get the "memory full" error. It seems to me that caching to the memory stick would be a great way to work around this constraint, but so far, without a hack, this isn't possible. While browsing, you can save music, video, and photos to your PSP directly through the WiFi connection.

### RSS Feeds

RSS Feeds are the latest new feature Sony has provided with the network update feature. Basically this feature turns your PSP into a Podcast/Media catcher. The RSS feed needs to have an RSS 2.0 dynamic feed for them to work with the PSP. The RSS feature uses the same memory configuration as the web browser so any media feed must stream to the PSP internal 32MB of memory. This feature also requires an active WiFi connection while listening to the feed. Most sites allow you to download or RSS the media you want to listen to. In my case when I'm around WiFi I stream if possible and download content I want to watch for when WiFi is not available or when the site does not support the RSS 2.0 dynamic feed. Unfortunately at this time the feeds for Zold2type radio are not dynamic so downloading them without RSS is required.

### Game Sharing

It is possible, depending on the game, to play with a friend over WiFi with one disc. The game sharing works by downloading the game software to the recipient's PSP. Most of the time, this is not a complete version of the game (just enough for multi-player capabilities).

The WiFi connection allows you to play multiplayer both in ad hoc or infrastructure modes (typical of wireless devices). There are several games, like SOCOM, that use matchmaking rooms for internet play. In fact SOCOM also uses the headset for voice communication which allows for clan play.

### PSP Also Displays Photos

Photos in JPEG format can be placed in the photo folder to be displayed on the PSP. Once again the only constraints are the amount of memory capacity available on the Memory Stick. Photo's can also be used as PSP backgrounds.

### PSP is Great for 2old2players!

Since I bought my PSP I have not used my Nintendo DS or GameBoy Advance. I was looking for PC / X-box style games to play in a portable platform and the PSP delivers. I am not interesting in pet Dogs, Mario, or Zelda even though those are fine games. I prefer mature games like first-person-shooters or role playing games. I found that I tend to cramp up trying to use the stylus or the thumb control on the DS after a short while whereas I can play the PSP for hours comfortably. This coupled with the video, web, and audio components not found in other portable game machines makes the PSP one of my favorite things to do.

## Derf

### Game Controls

- ① *D-Pad: Four Arrow Keys Left hand side.*
- ② *Stick: One Analog Stick Right below the Arrow Keys*
- ③ *Buttons: Usual Play Station like triangle, square, circle, and x keys on right.*
- ④ *Shoulders: Two shoulder buttons on the top left and right of the device.*
- ⑤ *Control: Select and Start buttons on the bottom right of the device.*
- ⑥ *Additional: Home, volume, and screen brightness across the bottom below the screen.*



# Ear Force X2 Wireless Headphones

## Wired Wireless

**W**hen can something be wireless yet still have wires? When it is a set of the Turtle Beach Ear Force X2 wireless headphones.

*Confused?*

The Ear Force X2 wireless headphones are wireless in that they do not have wires running to your game system, but they are wired in that you have to plug them into your controller. These headphones differ from the stock Xbox Live headset for the 360 in a few ways. Their true advantage is having two earpieces and advanced sound dynamics, so that you can simultaneously hear the game and voice chat through the headphones, unlike traditional headsets where you can only hear voice chat.

While the base unit and headphones are white, to match the 360, the headphones can be used with any game console or stereo playback source with analog RCA jacks. If you use the headphones with your TV or stereo, you do not need to have them connected to your controller. The microphone, however, is only compatible with Xbox 360 or Xbox.

The sound quality is pretty good for not being Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound. The headset features master volume control, while the controller connection cable includes a microphone mute switch. The microphone boom adjusts so you can put the microphone out of your way when necessary.

Since the headphones use infrared to transmit the signal, you must maintain line-of-sight with the base station or you will lose all audio. Unlike the audio consistency issues found with the stock 360 headset, people are not having a problem with my voice cutting out as long as I remain within the line-of-sight restriction.

The headphones are powered with two AAA batteries and are comfortable and sturdy. When your batteries start to go, the game audio will remain, but you'll lose team chat audio. Batteries last about 40 hours, if you do not forget to switch off the power on your headphones after each game play session. The base unit requires connection to a 120 Volt AC electric outlet.

Overall, I think the Turtle Beach Ear Force X2 wireless headphones are a nice development in the Xbox Live world. At \$70-\$99 a pop, they aren't the cheapest on the market, but isn't it priceless to have family members quit nagging you to turn it down during late night gaming sessions?

**Liger117**



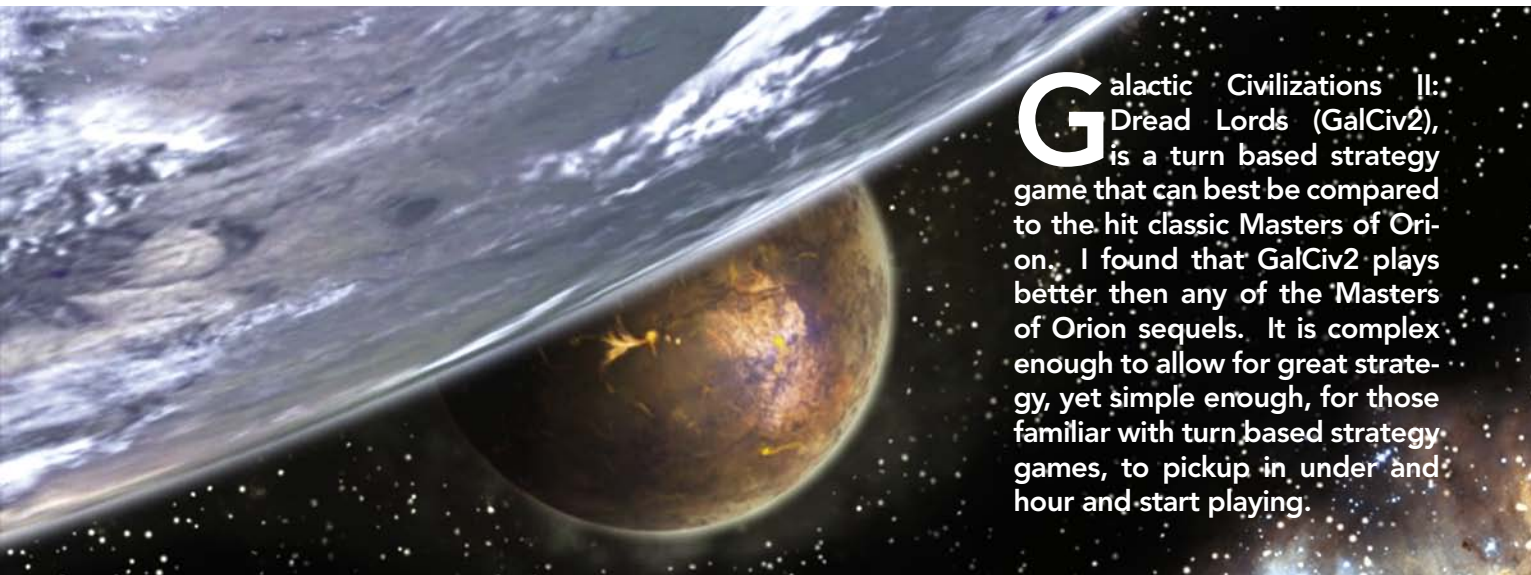
# EAR FORCE

## Wireless Xbox Headphones X2



# Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords

by: Stardock Entertainment



**G**alactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords (GalCiv2), is a turn based strategy game that can best be compared to the hit classic Masters of Orion. I found that GalCiv2 plays better than any of the Masters of Orion sequels. It is complex enough to allow for great strategy, yet simple enough, for those familiar with turn based strategy games, to pickup in under an hour and start playing.

GalCiv2 was designed on a very small budget. Roughly \$300,000 was available to provide a fully developed product that worked at the highest quality and was customer ready. Most games developed today would require a minimum of three times this amount of bankroll to even consider being a marketable product. A company with such a small budget can design a complete, quality game if they have two things: talent and desire. Stardock has plenty of each.

GalCiv2 is not a Masters of Orion clone by any stretch of the imagination. GalCiv2 is the next generation of turned based strategy, with great graphics to complement the game play and user customization. One of the most powerful qualities Stardock Entertainment possesses is their ability to listen to customer demands. Unlike large firms that listen to dollar signs and popular trends, Stardock listens to customer feedback on their message board and builds patches with bug fixes and product enhancements based on customer needs.

## Graphics & Sound

The graphics and sound do not reflect the shoe string budge that this game was created on. The music score is relaxing and very professional. The sound FX are not going to break any records or make you run out and get a Surround Sound system but they fit the game style.

The graphics are highly detailed and well rendered. Each ship has a unique design, including custom colors and a host of minute details. If you zoom into some of the star systems, you can see the geography on the planets (especially earth). In fact, many planets have small moons in orbit around them. For a turn based game, the graphic quality and attention to detail is higher than I would have expected.

## Single Game Mode

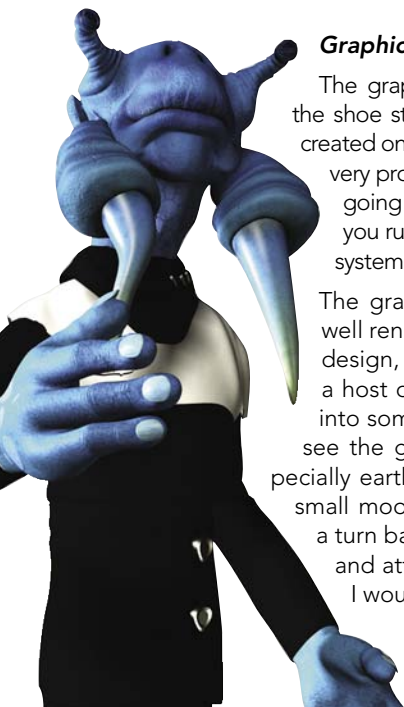
When you start your first game of GalCiv2, your first choice is to select the size of the galaxy you want. You can choose from tiny, small, medium, large, huge, gigantic, and custom size. The first time gamer might want to select a tiny or small galaxy, so that they can keep the game shorter and experience the game play and options. After a player builds their skill a bit, they will probably want to move into a gigantic galaxy. Gigantic galaxies are unimaginably big, and they provide hundreds of hours of competitive civilization goodness.

Once you have chosen your galaxy size, you must pick a civilization to rule. There are eleven civilizations to choose from, each with their own advantages and hurdles. With so many civilization choices, it is certain that you will find one that matches your gaming style. Each civilization offers unique ways of ruling the galaxy. Some do it by force, some by luck, others by military might, and still others by espionage, technology, or even sheer numbers.

Once you select your civilization, you are given a number of points, which you spend to increase your civilization's abilities in key gameplay attributes, such as: creativity, loyalty, luck, military production, defense, influence, trade, etc. The amount and variation of available abilities makes your civilization and game play unique every time you start a new game. This feature alone pushes replay value through the roof. You might try to destroy the galaxy with a huge military force, or through politics and trade, or by having so much technology you are too difficult to destroy, resulting in a "technological victory."

## Campaign Mode

Campaign mode sends you down the path of the Terran Alliance civilization, and contains objectives and an ultimate goal involving the Dread Lords. In campaign mode, you cannot select all the variations that you can in the single game mode. You can, however, choose between many more difficulty levels. The difficulty levels for the campaign are: cakewalk, easy, simple, beginner, normal, challenging, tough, painful, crippling, masochistic, obscene, and suicidal.



## Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords (Continued)

Although you play as the Terran Alliance, you still can customize the civilization's abilities to fit your gaming style. Campaign mode allows you to start simple, and build up to newer difficulties, as you progress through the campaigns.

Campaign mode offers you a goal oriented reason for playing. Some people like to play a single game like it was a chess match. Others may prefer a campaign style to experience a level of progression and wholeness in their gaming experience. GalCiv2 provides multiple options to suit any personality.



### The Metaverse

Stardock takes a single player, turn based game, and turns it into a competitive show of skill. The "Metaverse" brings gamers together by posting high scores online, through the game system, for later viewing on metaverse.galciv2.com. All metaverse games follow a standard set of rules, allowing no custom maps, to keep a level playing field.

The metaverse brings the gamer community closer together, and allows those with an itchy competitive edge to feed their hunger. This is completely an option, and one need never bother with the metaverse game if they just want to sit down and play through without the thought of other real human beings.

### Turn Based Gaming

The turn-based nature of GalCiv2 makes it great for gamers with an abundance of interruptions; like the 25+ gamer. People that enjoy turn based strategy games will find a warm place in their heart for GalCiv2. There are very few good turn based games being developed for the PC today. GalCiv2 plays well on most standard laptops, so there is no excuse not to cuddle up on the couch with your loved one while playing a few turns.

A "turn" in GalCiv2 is equal to one week of "real time," so all units of measure are typically listed in weeks. For instance, if you want to build a powerful ship it might take sixty two weeks to build it. That is equivalent to clicking "turn" sixty two times, if no external variables change to speed up or slow down the ship building progress. Imagine how many turns Darth Vader had to wait for his death star.

Turn based games do not suit everyone's gaming desires. If you have played a turn based strategy game in the past, and found it enjoyable, you may find yourself up until sunrise with the addictive nature of this game.

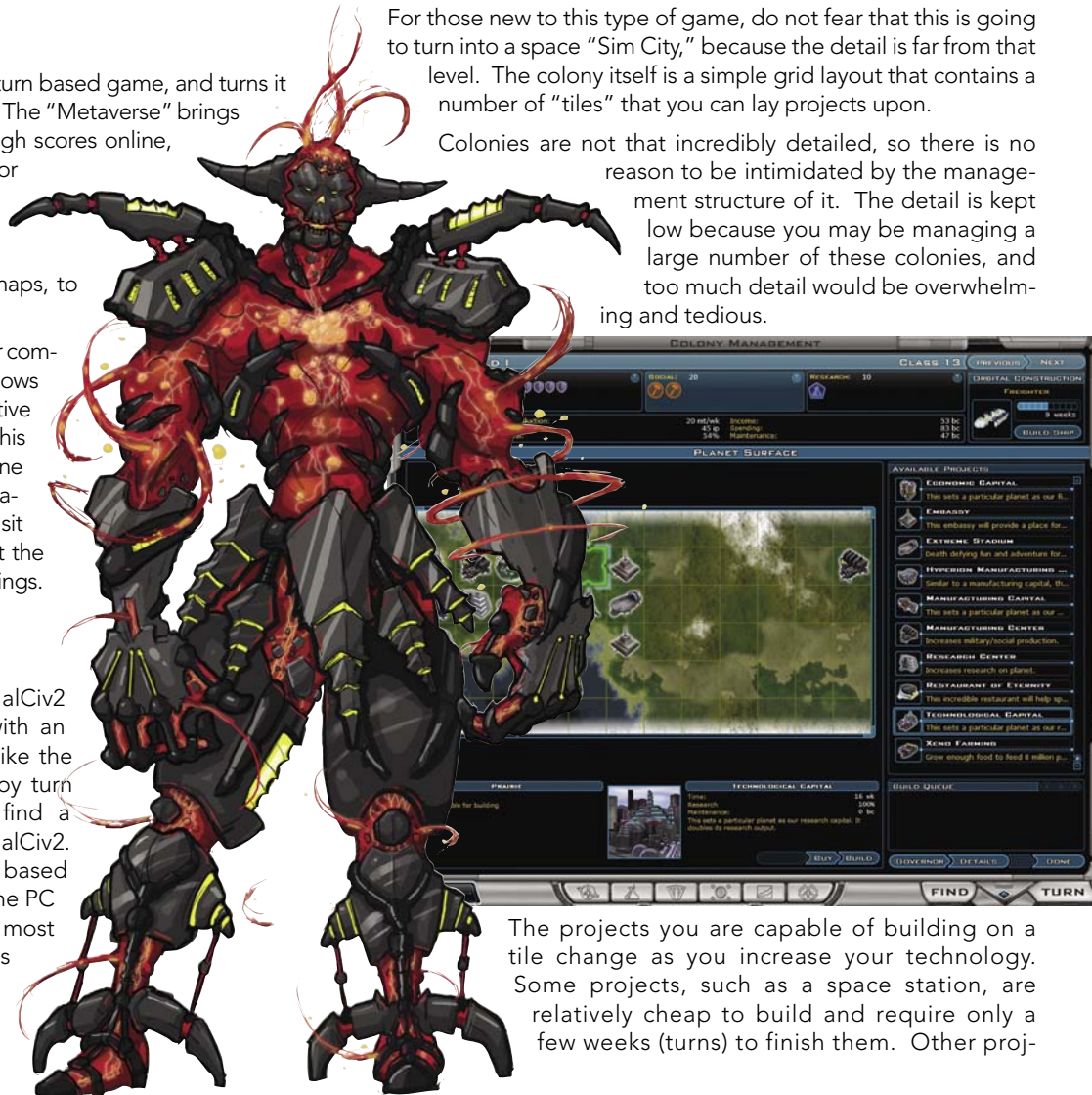
### Managing Your Colonies

Every colony has three key attributes to manage: military, social, and research. The player is able to split their resources across all three fields, or target a specific attribute for that given planet.

When a planet invests highly in research, it will gain new technologies faster, because it is contributing to the creation of your technological marvels. The social attribute will help in population growth and speeds up planetary upgrades. A stadium to entertain your colony might take fifty two weeks to produce, but focusing your social resources will bring that time down significantly, to something in the twenty week time frame. A planet that puts more effort into military will produce your ships faster.

For those new to this type of game, do not fear that this is going to turn into a space "Sim City," because the detail is far from that level. The colony itself is a simple grid layout that contains a number of "tiles" that you can lay projects upon.

Colonies are not that incredibly detailed, so there is no reason to be intimidated by the management structure of it. The detail is kept low because you may be managing a large number of these colonies, and too much detail would be overwhelming and tedious.



The projects you are capable of building on a tile change as you increase your technology. Some projects, such as a space station, are relatively cheap to build and require only a few weeks (turns) to finish them. Other proj-

ects are major accomplishments, and all civilizations are notified when you have created one (similar to a Sid Meier's: Civilization "Wonders of the World"). Projects will help advance your population growth, open new places to build on the planet, create economic growth, and build research centers.

Colony management is a good part of GalCiv2. The colonies are simple to manage and require little attention once you've queued up some projects or ships. Some colonies are so small you may just set them on one desired path, such as research, and leave them alone for years. Each and every colony will contribute something to your civilization and the empire it supports. So, do not forget the little people in life.

### Managing Your Technology

One of the greatest aspects of GalCiv2, in my opinion, is the ability to design new technologies and continually build an edge against other civilizations. The advanced technology works in your favor in a number of ways. New technologies become negotiation tools when talking with other civilizations in need. Technology also means project upgrades on your planets, government and political discoveries such as new styles of government, and more powerful weapons.



GalCiv2 contains many technologies, and perfecting them all is not usually a feasible option. The technology branches are all color coded to make it easier to read and understand. Weapon technologies are red, research advancements are blue, government is yellow, economics are orange, logistics are pink, and there are many others. You might choose the yellow and blue route and try to build up your research and advance your political power while also utilizing a little of the green branch, which covers construction and farming, to build up your population. The potential combinations are enormous, and each route you take will change how you win or lose the game.

Technology is a big part of this game and adds huge amounts of replay ability. If you want to spend your money on a strategy game that can give you hours upon hours of entertainment, the technology tree alone will keep your mind racing with possibilities.

### Economy 101

No civilization likes the idea of taxes. This is just a fact of life, and your colonies realize that taxes are needed, but that does not mean they have to like it. Just like many civilization based games, the higher the tax rates, the better chance your people will revolt. Nobody wants to lose an entire planet to an outside influence, especially if it's an enemy bordering your space.



Taxes and Spending are your two changeable economic values, and within your spending you can select how to distribute it:

How you adjust your spending will likely explain your tactics for winning. You may also change them over time as you become aggressive in different areas. You may push for more social spending as a young civilization, then later move into research spending to build better weapons (now that you have more people to work on projects). Some may end with military force to vanquish all other civilizations.

The game economy is simple enough that you do not feel a burden of financial management. There are enough bars and levers to tweak things for your given purposes, but enough simplicity to let you set it once and forget about it.

### Exploring the Galaxy

The galaxy map is contains star systems with suns and planets like a real galaxy. Exploring the galaxy requires scout ships, and usually, some technology that makes their engines better. As you explore, you will find many uninhabitable planets, and a few that are fit for colonizing. Not all planets are plush lands of opportunity, and some may only be able to support a few million people, but every planet contributes to your empire.

Exploring in GalCiv2 can be slow at times, especially in the beginning of a game. The larger the galaxy, the more you can find and explore, but the harder it will be to conquer. The speed at which you develop your engine technology will probably be impacted by the size of the galaxy you have chosen to play.





Josh Diffey

  
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### Battle Logistics

The battle system in GalCiv2 is better balanced than some turn based strategy games. Masters of Orion could be beaten using a large military force of small ships that all contained one large gun: the death ray. GalCiv2 irons out the wrinkles in a basic battle system with the logistics method. Logistics is a researchable technology that increases fleet command sizes as you research deeper into this technology branch. A civilization with extremely devastating military power is only as good as its commanding officer. You may have five hundred small ships with a single powerful weapon, and an almighty shield system, but without logistics, you can only group your fleet in small sets, perhaps only two or three ships for early logistics technology. Two ships against an opponent with half the power but four times the logistics will get you into some serious trouble.



In many ways, the battle system is simplified compared to Masters of Orion. Battles can be displayed in full length while on the "Battle Screen", which allows you to watch the battle and monitor how your ships handle the enemy on a 3D playing field, but you cannot alter the outcome. This battle screen allows you to replay the battle "VCR style" with video controls to stop, rewind, forward, and play out the battle. There are no strategic moves to how a ship attacks another ship; this is determined by the game engine itself. You click on the enemy fleet and attack it. The battle is resolved and the results are posted. You win or you lose. The loser's fleet is destroyed.

Ground battles can be extremely expensive to fund. To attack a colony, you must first have the technology known as "planetary invasion." Without the required technology, you can hold ships in orbit but cannot take the colony. A colony ship that holds five hundred people will have a difficult time destroying a million colonists. You can spend additional funds to increase your odds, or you can pay a small fee to cause massive damage to the planet. There are benefits and hindrances to all methods, so your specific goals must be thought out first. If you wish to keep the colony in perfect quality, to become a contributing member to your own civilization, you will be spending a good deal of money in order to protect it during your invasions. If you want to make sure it can no longer be a threat, then larger substantial bombing attacks can make that occur quickly and cheaply.

Battles may or may not be a large part of GalCiv2, depending on how you wish to play the game. However, it is a way to win, and your enemy knows it as well.

### Ship Design

The ship design system is amazing. You can customize the look and feel of your ship, and supply it with all the weapons you've researched. As your technology increases, you can design new ships or re-design old models with new parts. Once you have new designs or re-designs, you can upgrade your fleet ship by ship or all at once (which can become very expensive for large fleets).

The amount of cosmetic ship design is over the top. You can add lights, wings, blade-like attachments, extensions, and so many additional cosmetics that every ship in your fleet can look unique. Granted, this does not affect its battle abilities, but it does make the ships look great and gives you a sense of ownership.

Ships can be uploaded to [galciv2.com](http://galciv2.com) to share with other players. This means you can also download new custom ships if you find yourself lacking creativity or you do not see ship building as your forte.



The Stardock team obviously spent a great deal of time with the ship design system and they should be praised for their efforts. The fact that you can upgrade ships in the field, means you do not have to spend time and energy finding them all and decommissioning them, throwing out the design, rebuilding, and re-flying them to their old position. You can upgrade a ship, or your entire fleet where it sits, and be done with it.



### Politics and Trade

There are many governments to choose from and as you advance, new governments become available. A government that gives increases to technology may be a good idea for those



## Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords (Continued)

players that are big into research. A government based more on a militant way of life can be great for those that want to conquer all and leave no prisoners.

The other civilizations use politics to their advantage, just like a human would. They build alliances, wage wars, and conduct espionage to get whatever they need. Trade routes will be set-up between civilizations, so both can benefit, which may also benefit you in war time. If you attack an enemy colony that has a very lucrative trade route to another civilization, they may ask you to cease your attack. If you ignore them you may have more on your plate then you are ready to handle.



Political technologies also affect your political skill. You may make many demands and have blunt requests that send you to war if you do not have the skill to handle your neighbors. A civilization with high political technologies has the advantage when it comes to stopping wars, gaining new technologies, and receiving gifts of praise.



The political system is probably one of the more difficult areas to master in GalCiv2. Military might is fairly straightforward, but when it comes to being the nice guy, you have to tread water lightly. You must also take the time to research political technologies. It is hard to choose a ten week political technology when you can get advanced missiles in only three weeks. You must realize the value of politics, or end up with many empires hunting you down.

### The reason you must own Galactic Civilizations II

This game is fun for all ages and contains minimal violence, while requiring constant brain power. It is similar to a space chess game, where you must understand there are many paths you can take and many reactions to your actions.

Being a turn based game with minimal system requirements can be great for adults with kids. You can sneak in an hour here and there, maybe a bit before dinner, and a bit before you go to bed. You must control your urges to click the "turn" button when it gets late, because there are no drugs you can take to get you off this addiction.

If you were a fan of Masters of Orion or loved any of Sid Meier's strategy games, you may want to go out and buy this today. The price is almost \$20.00 less then an Xbox 360 game, so it won't burn a hole in your wallet. You will also find a great support message forum, where you can talk directly with members of the team (yes, even the lead developer), and get feedback on any issues you may be having with the game.

Graphics:	7
Sound:	6
Game play:	10
Replay value:	10

## CodeMonkey

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<http://www.stardock.com>

<http://www.galciv2.com>





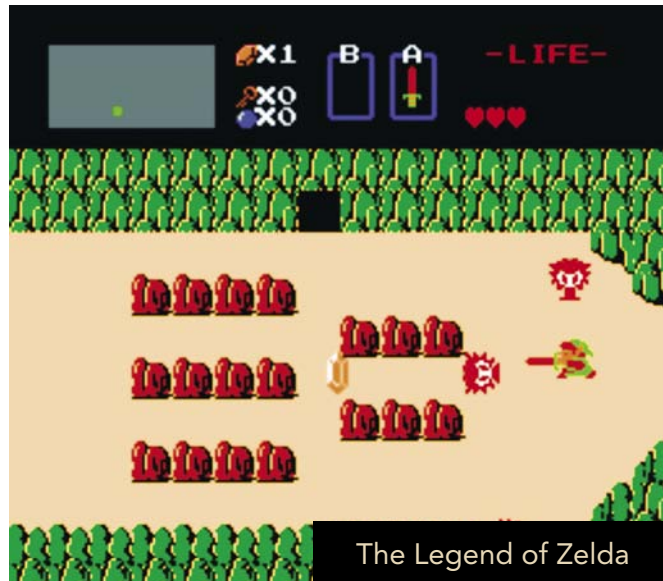
# The Legend of *The Legend of Zelda*

**I**t was the year Nineteen Hundred Eighty Six when a new star would be born on the horizon. A little hero, known only as "Link," would birth a world containing dozens of items, dark labyrinths, evil enemies, and lands full of exploration.

The game was known as The Legend of Zelda to us and Zeruda no Densetsu to the fans in Japan. In 1987, Link would jump the pond to the United States and sell thousands upon thousands of little gold cartridges to the general public. Some people argue that the best video game ever created on the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) is, without a doubt, The Legend of Zelda. As of September 2005, the Legend of Zelda series has sold 47 million units, according to Nintendo sales figures. Regardless of sales figures and actual copies sold, The Legend of Zelda is revered as one of the best adventure RPG's on a console system, and it laid the path for all adventure games that followed.

Zelda has probably been so successful because of its mix of game play styles. There is plenty of action to be found fighting octorocks and dodging arrow fire from hobgoblins. Yet, one could also spend hours adventuring through the world, solving puzzles, bombing walls, lighting trees on fire, and searching out people to help you. In many ways, Zelda was a role playing, adventure, action, and puzzle solving game all bundled in one design. With so many varieties of play it is no wonder that fans of all ages and gender spent hours in front of the television ordering Link around the world.

Death Mountain, giving him many varying degrees of challenge. A gamer was rewarded for putting in extra hours of adventuring and hunting when they came upon heart containers just out of eyesight. A gamer could opt to enter labyrinth number one with three hearts for life or, potentially, four or five if they hunted for hearts ahead of time (often a gamer who had beaten the game before would accomplish these feats quickly). This reward for extra effort may have been the birth of the "side quest", now common in modern RPG games.



This game contained many unique items that other games just never provided. You were not a character with a sword and shield that roamed the countryside. You were a boy who obtained boats, ladders, rings, bracers, wands, whistles, shield/sword upgrades, boomerangs, potions, and more. Although only two items could be equipped at a single time, and one was always a sword, you could change your secondary item whenever you wanted, which was usually important for solving many of the game's puzzles.

So why was Zelda so addictive? Perhaps it was because the world was seemingly endless. The dungeons became difficult, but they contained many hidden doors, secret walls, and one new item in each labyrinth that would advance Link's power. One of the reasons the game was so attractive was its graphics, which were impressive for that timeframe. It may also have been the simple storyline and plot that kept people interested. You found eight pieces of the Triforce (one per labyrinth) in order to save the princess, who was held by the evil Gannon in the last labyrinth. The story was not complex, nor did it contain any twists or turns along the way. It was simple, creative, and well designed.

After the initial release of Zelda, a second, "black sheep" Zelda game, was put into the market in 1988 (one year later for the US fans): *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*. Unlike the top-down view of the original Zelda game, this game featured a side scrolling adventure similar to *Super Mario Brothers*, but in an RPG format. The concept of Rupees was left out, many new enemies were created, and the same gold cartridge was used to maintain that Zelda "look and feel."



Zelda also contained an ever increasing difficulty, based on different labyrinth 'levels' and world areas. A new player was never in over their head, unless they strayed too far from the destined path. Link starts in the plush grasslands and ends the game in





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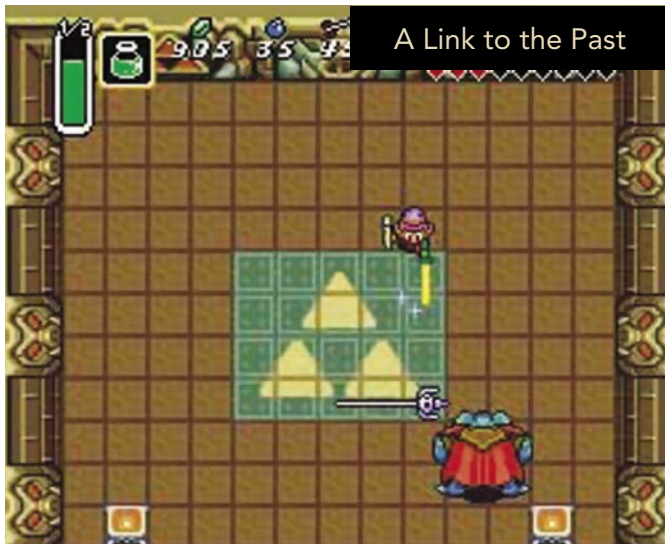


## The Legend of *The Legend of Zelda*



This game was more difficult to grasp, contained RPG style experience points to gain skills, and, overall, was more difficult. This was largely due to the many lava pits to jump and the nasty labyrinth villains to vanquish. Overall, *Zelda II* failed to capture the feel of *Zelda* in many fan's minds, and they were greatly disappointed by the loss of their top-down view adventure. The old school *Zelda* zealots had to wait another four years to see Link return to their screen in a top-down view, and they had to upgrade to the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) to see it.

The finest hour for Nintendo and *Zelda* fans alike would be 1992, when *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* was born. The third installment in the series, loosely known as *Zelda 3*, brought back the original top-down format for the game and revived that original *Zelda* look and feel. Fans quickly forgot the bad taste left from *Zelda II* when they got *A Link to the Past*. The third version of *Zelda* had a few new features that helped



to make it a success story. The dungeons were now multiple levels, deep connected by staircases that little Link could traverse, new monsters, new and old items, graphics to match its time, and most notably, the Dark World. Link's puzzle solving skills had to be fine tuned in order to handle the fact that the game took place in two "mirror" worlds, one of Light and one of Dark. Using Link's magic mirror device, he would switch back and forth from the Dark World to the Light World where slight terrain variations could mean new and unique ways of travers-

ing hard to reach areas. A fence in the Light World might be torn down in the Dark World, allowing Link to pass, then switch back to the Light World and be on the other side of the fence.

The third installment had the same mixture of components that made the original *Zelda* such a hit with a boost in graphic quality. Overall, the graphics of *Zelda* have never been milestones of technology, but they complemented great game play and a great story. This release lasted five years in the number one spot before finally being retired.

How would Nintendo try to beat its prior success? A migration to the Game Boy hand held system held the answer. Gamers that loved version three would have to purchase a Game Boy in order to play this not-so-colorful *Zelda* game: *Link's Awakening*, in 1993. Although the hand held game might not have been the same as its console brethren in terms of success stories, it did set the stage for many future *Zelda* releases that would hit other consoles and other hand held gaming platforms.



Five years later (or six years, if you do not count hand held systems), the next *Zelda* game arrived. On November 23rd 1998, the *Zelda* series went into the third dimension (3D) with *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* on the Nintendo 64. Yet again, gamers would have to buy another console platform to play this *Zelda* hit. The powerhouse console was able to render Link in 3D to satisfy the new technology formats arriving at that



## The Legend of *The Legend of Zelda* (Continued)

time. "Within five months of its release, Ocarina of Time sold over five million copies, and a total of 8.6 million copies have been sold worldwide. It is widely regarded as one of the finest games ever made across any genre and platform." (Wikipedia) How is it that a 3D version of Zelda was a success, where the 2D side scroller just didn't cut the mustard? Perhaps people were now ready for a change, or perhaps, the storyline, awe inspiring graphics, and game play were still on par with the original.



The Wind Waker

The Zelda series would go on and make two more games for the Game Boy Color in 2001: Oracle of Ages, and Oracle of Seasons. One would be more action based while the other more of a puzzle-based game. In 2003 (US release), Four Swords arrived on the Game Boy Advance. It was a multi-player only release, that appeared with the porting of the Nintendo 64's The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past hit. Four Swords never was released as a stand alone cartridge, and required you to buy the older Nintendo 64 ported hand-held version in order to play it.



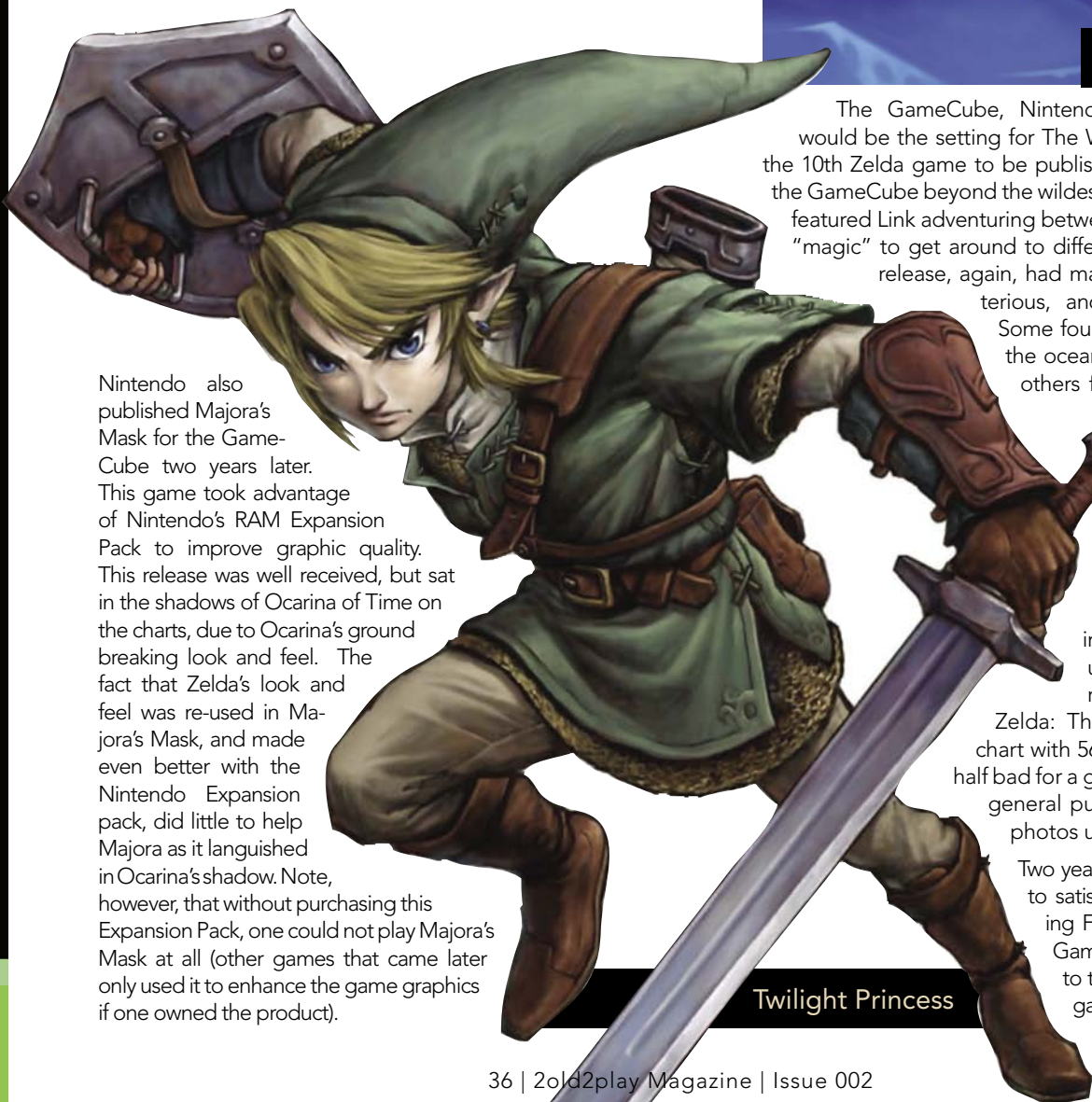
The Wind Waker

The GameCube, Nintendo's 6th generation console, would be the setting for The Wind Waker. In 2003, this was the 10th Zelda game to be published and boosted the sales of the GameCube beyond the wildest of expectations. This release featured Link adventuring between islands using the wind and "magic" to get around to different water-locked lands. This release, again, had many creative puzzles, was mysterious, and included dark adventures. Some found the concept of sailing over the ocean tedious and annoying, while others found the creativity refreshing for the series.

The graphics took a new route into "cel-shading," which gives it the cartoon/animation look and feel. At first, many feared that the graphic change would ruin the Zelda image, but it was a success, as usual, for Nintendo. IGN.com reported that The Legend of

Zelda: The Wind Waker topped their chart with 560,000 pre-orders. That is not half bad for a game that was only seen by the general public in magazines and online photos up until that point.

Two years later, in 2005, Nintendo, tried to satisfy people's desires by publishing Four Swords Adventures on the GameCube. This was very similar to the original Game Boy Advance game of a similar name, but it



Twilight Princess

Nintendo also published Majora's Mask for the GameCube two years later. This game took advantage of Nintendo's RAM Expansion Pack to improve graphic quality. This release was well received, but sat in the shadows of Ocarina of Time on the charts, due to Ocarina's ground breaking look and feel. The fact that Zelda's look and feel was re-used in Majora's Mask, and made even better with the Nintendo Expansion pack, did little to help Majora as it languished in Ocarina's shadow. Note, however, that without purchasing this Expansion Pack, one could not play Majora's Mask at all (other games that came later only used it to enhance the game graphics if one owned the product).



Minish Cap

would contain a single player mode. This was not a hit game, like many of the prior releases. However, the next hand held release, known as *The Minish Cap*, probably assisted in the Game Boy Advance sales boosts with its award winning release. *The Minish Cap* would take the 2005 GBA Game of the Year by GameSpot, GameSpy Editor's Choice, Game of the Year, and Adventure Game of the year. Not too shabby for a portable game.

What next? We sit and we wait. Nintendo's marketing power is stretching again to bring three more unique *Zelda* releases for the GameCube, Nintendo DS (hand-held), and Nintendo Revolution. The next installment for the GameCube, confirmed for Fall of '06, is *Twilight Princess*. This promises to be a GameCube release and will not held for the Revolution. The Nintendo Revolution will be producing "*Zelda Revolution*," which is the rumored name (similar to "*Super Zelda*" which later was known as *A Link to the Past*). However, very few specifics have been released. Later in 2006, we should see *Phantom Hourglass*, a 3D cel-shaded installment similar to *The Wind Waker*, but set to release only on the Nintendo DS hand-held system.

Besides the Mario and Luigi characters, Nintendo has relied on Link and his world to sell its console systems. Many people wait to buy a Nintendo console until they hear word of a *Zelda* game being produced. This might be why Nintendo has been so successful selling *Zelda* into all console designs including hand held gaming. If you take a look back at history, you will see a pattern: every great release of *Zelda* comes with a new console generation. The huge, flagship releases, are always successful and always debut on new Nintendo platforms. With the exception of *Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*, a hit *Zelda* game exists only once for each generation of console (perhaps until *Twilight Princess* arrives for the GameCube). *Zelda II* was not what all the fans truly wanted, and many other releases were ports to other, smaller devices, or bundle/puzzle games.

There is no denying that Nintendo knows what they hold with *The Legend of Zelda* series. Now we must wait, and see if that weapon can shoot down the Xbox 360 and Playstation 3 sales figures.

## CodeMonkey

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<http://www.nintendo.com>



# Stardock Entertainment Q&A

**S**tardock was founded by 20 year old college student Brad Wardell to help pay for school. Incorporated in 1993, Stardock focused on developing software for IBM's OS/2 operating system. Wardell wrote the OS/2 game Galactic Civilizations between taking electrical engineering classes and teaching digital logic lab, and helping run the university Macintosh lab.

Today Stardock publishes fun independent games while developing their own success stories like Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords. They continue to produce excellent windows enhancement tools and programs such as WindowBlinds.



## Stardock Entertainment Q &amp; A (Continued)

**S**tardock was nice enough to answer a few questions that 2o2p Magazine had for them about gaming, what its like to build games, and where they see themselves going in the future.



Galactic Civilizations 2

**2old2play:** I read on [www.galciv2.com](http://www.galciv2.com) that over half your staff works remotely. Does that cause any miss-communications? If there is a staff meeting how does everyone come together to participate?

**Stardock:** While the staff can work at home, most of them live locally so they are available for staff meetings. Most work at the office enough to stay current with the game's progress. In addition we communicate extensively via IRC and other chat methods.

**2o2p:** Do you have several small offices around the globe or does your remote staff work from home?

**S:** The remote staff works from home but they are in constant communication with us via IM or IRC or e-mail.

**2o2p:** Are Stardock games all quality tested in-house or do you contract out and/or public beta your applications?

**S:** They are tested both in-house and in public betas. One of the challenges with developing for the PC is that not everyone has exactly the same system. The more public beta testing we can do, the better the likelihood that we will eliminate bugs.

**2o2p:** What does your staff do for fun when they are not working hard to promote and produce games and Windows utilities? Are there any company outings or surprises to help keep the teams motivated and happy?

**S:** When a big movie comes out we often take the afternoon off and go see it together. Now that spring is here we are restarting our weekly basketball games as well.

**2o2p:** The Stardock Entertainment team must have some diehard gamers. If I stopped a few of the developers in the hall and asked them what game first motivated them to not only play video games but to get into the business, what would some of the responses be?

**S:** Our lead developer, Cari Begle, says that when she was in college and began considering game development as an option she was playing Bethesda's Dragonfall and Companions of Xanth (somewhere around '95 or '96). Others had been playing and attempting to program games since before the Atari days

and others are more recently into games.

**2o2p:** The history of Stardock is fairly impressive with Brad Wardell founding the company as a 20 year old college student and going on to be successful from there. Does Mr. Wardell continue to have the fun and enthusiasm of a 20 year old trying to make it big in the world? Does he wear dorky T-Shirts into work and act like a gamer?

**S:** Why yes, yes he does wear dorky T-Shirts into work and act like a gamer! How did you guess?? He is enthusiastic and dedicated to his work and still loves to play video games.

**2o2p:** What books are on your computer desk or in your office?

**S:** Various books from the Primatex line on game programming. Some physics reference books and various programming reference books as well.

**2o2p:** Brad Wardell has a Postmortem of Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords on [www.gamasutra.com](http://www.gamasutra.com) and he mentions a 300k development budget. Was it macaroni & cheese and water for the development crew with such a small budget? Did you find yourselves working huge amounts of hours to squeeze as much productivity in as possible?

**S:** There was a time right after Christmas that there were some long hours put in by the game team in order to get all of the features we wanted in the game. But no, we weren't forced to live on macaroni and cheese. Pizza maybe.

**2o2p:** Was it hard to balance family life with work during development of Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords?

**S:** It can be difficult when working long hours to try and balance life and work. Although it was only temporary, long hours can be wearing. It's important for each employee to try and take at least one day completely off of working to rest and recuperate.

**2o2p:** Did any particular area of development stand out as the "most difficult" while coding Galactic Civilizations 2: Dread Lords?

**S:** Anything having to do with threading is always a challenge. People don't usually think in terms of multi-threading; trying to have multiple things happening at once without errors.

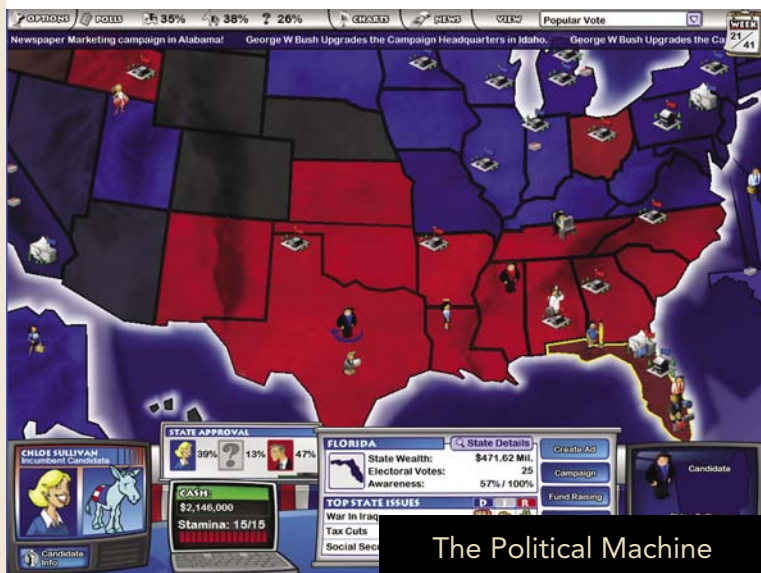
**2o2p:** Does Stardock Entertainment plan on continuing game development while it expands into independent game publishing?

**S:** Yes, we are planning on a new MMO "Society", which is set on a world that begins in a pre-medieval setting.



## Stardock Entertainment Q & A (Continued)

Each world is broken up into thousands of provinces. Players start with a single province to build in and can expand into other provinces over time. They can choose to play the game as a trader/diplomat in which their society only holds a few provinces or they can attempt to conquer the provinces held by others. We also plan to develop a sequel to 2004's popular TBS "The Political Machine"



**2o2p: Why did you choose 'Stardock Central', an installable application on a PC, as a primary way to manage game purchasing, demos, and components as opposed to a 100% web-based solution like ebgames.com to manage the software?**

S: Stardock Central is a proprietary application which we created several years ago before traditional ESD had become mainstream. The SDC program allows our customers to streamline the management of their software by handling the installation archival and update process entirely. An additional upside to this is that once downloaded the customer no longer needs to have Internet access to use the games and software they've purchased.

**2o2p: I noticed that Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords requires Microsoft Windows. Are there any plans to support platforms other than Windows, such as Macintosh or maybe even Linux?**

S: We have no plans to port the game to other platforms in-house, although if outside companies wished to approach us about it we would be open to those discussions.

**2o2p: Has Stardock done any research into Microsoft's new XNA development framework? Is this something we might see your company utilize to simplify your game development to target a broad range of Microsoft platforms and consoles?**

S: We're just beginning to look into it now – the crunch of finishing GalCiv2 prevented us from learning and implementing it in the game. But yes, we like to and want to keep up with and make use of the new technology.

**2o2p: Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords has an optional CD-key, can you explain your stance on copy protection? It seems that today games are so over complicated with copy protection schemes that some systems cannot even play them and within a month a crack is already created anyway.**

S: Stardock does not feel that it is useful to have any kind of copy protection scheme that inconveniences the customer. Hence, there is no copy protection on GalCiv2. Rather, we decided to reward those who bought the game by giving them access to upgrades and cool new features when they register.

**2o2p: It may only be a rough statistic, but the galciv2.com website says that 7% of people heard about Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords via word of mouth and 6% from printed game magazines. Does this surprise you? Perhaps the quality and fun of a game speaks for itself?**

S: Word of mouth has always been important to Stardock, and we strive to create communities that people enjoy being a part of. It doesn't surprise us too much that the amount of people who heard about the game through print magazines is roughly equivalent to those who heard about it from friends.

**2o2p: Do you guys feel you capture the male and female audience with your game selections or is it still a highly male dominated arena?**

S: It is a highly male dominated arena but we have some die-hard female players. The nature of strategy games is such that gender doesn't really make much of a difference.

**2o2p: I downloaded the demo of 'BreakQuest' and was amazed at the graphics, collision detections, and all the great nostalgia from the original BreakOut games. Do the simpler retro games seem to be bigger hits for Stardock?**

S: We try and have a variety of games available for various demographics, and while the puzzle and "retro" games are popular, they are not among our most popular games.

**2o2p: Many of us gamers are getting older and are heading into our early 30's. The latest trend from Nintendo and Microsoft, especially with Xbox 360 marketplace, is to provide us with arcade classics, puzzle games, and games that invoke nostalgia. It seems that Stardock has already figured that out with some of the games on your site. Is it just a coincidence because those games require a smaller budget or was this done to grab the current "old gamer" demographic?**



S: We select games based primarily on their "fun factor". We decided to carry games like BreakQuest and Gish and others not because of their production budget and demographic appeal but because we thought they were fun to play and that others would also enjoy them.

**2o2p: It's obvious that Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords has become a hit and that other distributors are figuring out you guys have some great talent. Are there other aces up the sleeve for future games that are smash hit hopefuls? Perhaps an arcade TRON classic, or Spy Hunter?**



## Stardock Entertainment Q & A (Continued)

S: We certainly do hope to produce more games that people enjoy. As I mentioned earlier, we are developing an online MMO called Society as well as expanding our current game library with the creation of Political Machine 2008 and expansions for GalCiv2.

**2o2p: Many of your games from the Stardock Central downloader look as if they would be great candidates for Microsoft Xbox 360 Marketplace. Any chance we will see your company offering content on Microsoft consoles in the future?**

S: We'd like to but that comes down to XNA and how easy XNA makes it to port the game to the 360. We'll be looking into it.

**2o2p: Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords is a highly addictive game. Do you find employee's sneaking in a "few turns" at work or does everyone tend to stay focused on the job at hand?**

S: We call it "beta testing". But yes, once we start playing the game it's pretty hard to stop!

**2o2p: What type of schooling is best suited for getting into game development? Is a standard Computer Science degree good enough or do you really suggest people go to a school focused on game development?**

S: A standard computer science degree is enough, but it helps if you've designed games and there are things you can learn in a game school. But just going to a game school doesn't mean you will be a good game developer. It's important to be truly passionate about the work, so much so that you are constantly striving to learn more about your chosen field on your own time.

**2o2p: Do you have any advice for aspiring independent developers who already have "real world" jobs but would love to get into the business?**

S: Work hard. Make games, even if they are small. If you come up with a good enough idea maybe a way will open.

### References:

<http://www.societygame.com/>

<http://www.politicalmachine.com/>

<http://www.stardock.com>

<http://www.galciv2.com>



# It's 3:30! Do you know where your children are?

(A Daddy's opinion of game/internet safety)

**A**s a co-parent of three children, I have tried my best to protect my kids from inappropriate material both in games and online. This can be a lot more difficult than you can imagine.

My two oldest children are now 17 and 16, with my 8-year-old trying desperately to catch up. Just what constitutes "inappropriate" is different for every family.

I, for instance, am fairly conservative when it comes to the types of movies my kids watch. I am more concerned with nudity and sexual content than with certain types of violence or language.

Both of my older kids saw R-rated movies well before the age of 17 and they have had to miss certain PG-13 movies even though they are both over 16.

I like to screen the movies that they view using a website called [www.screenit.com](http://www.screenit.com). You don't need to subscribe in order to use the site, just click on "No Thanks" at the bottom of the page. It's an extremely thorough movie review site that will amaze you.

Ever wondered how many F-words were in a movie? How about "S" words? It amazes me people take the time to log all of the swearing, nudity, and suggestive elements in a movie, but I'm very glad that they do. Try this experiment on that site: look up American Pie movie and the sequels and notice the progression of foul language listed there. It's almost as if Hollywood is trying to outdo themselves with each new offering at the theater.

The same can be said for console video games. Video games come with an ESRB rating, which is similar to the rating system used in movies. The "Entertainment Software Ratings Board" assigns a rating system to every game.

ESRB Content Descriptors

- \* Alcohol Reference - Reference to and/or images of alcoholic beverages

- \* Animated Blood - Discolored and/or unrealistic depictions of blood
- \* Blood - Depictions of blood
- \* Blood and Gore - Depictions of blood or the mutilation of body parts
- \* Cartoon Violence - Violent actions involving cartoon-like situations and characters. May include violence where a character is unharmed after the action has been inflicted
- \* Comic Mischief - Depictions or dialogue involving slapstick or suggestive humor
- \* Crude Humor - Depictions or dialogue involving vulgar antics, including "bathroom" humor
- \* Drug Reference - Reference to and/or images of illegal drugs
- \* Edutainment - Content of product provides user with specific skills development or reinforcement learning within an entertainment setting. Skill development is an integral part of product
- \* Fantasy Violence - Violent actions of a fantasy nature, involving human or non-human characters in situations easily distinguishable from real life
- \* Informational - Overall content of product contains data, facts, resource information, reference materials or instructional text
- \* Intense Violence - Graphic and realistic-looking depictions of physical conflict. May involve extreme and/or realistic blood, gore, weapons and depictions of human injury and death
- \* Language - Mild to moderate use of profanity
- \* Lyrics - Mild references to profanity, sexuality, violence, alcohol or drug use in music
- \* Mature Humor - Depictions or dialogue involving "adult" humor, including sexual references
- \* Mild Violence - Mild scenes depicting characters in unsafe

## These descriptions of the ratings are taken from the official [ESRB website](http://www.esrb.org):



### EARLY CHILDHOOD

Titles rated EC (Early Childhood) have content that may be suitable for ages 3 and older. Contains no material that parents would find inappropriate.

### EVERYONE



Titles rated E (Everyone) have content that may be suitable for ages 6 and older. Titles in this category may contain minimal cartoon, fantasy or mild violence and/or infrequent use of mild language.

### RATING PENDING



Titles listed as RP (Rating Pending) have been submitted to the ESRB and are awaiting final rating. (This symbol appears only in advertising prior to a game's release.)

### EVERYONE 10+



Titles rated E10+ (Everyone 10 and older) have content that may be suitable for ages 10 and older. Titles in this category may contain more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language and/or minimal suggestive themes.

### TEEN



Titles rated T (Teen) have content that may be suitable for ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling, and/or infrequent use of strong language.

### MATURE



Titles rated M (Mature) have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Titles in this category may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language.

### ADULTS ONLY



Titles rated AO (Adults Only) have content that should only be played by persons 18 years and older. Titles in this category may include prolonged scenes of intense violence and/or graphic sexual content and nudity.



and/or violent situations

- \* Nudity - Graphic or prolonged depictions of nudity
- \* Partial Nudity - Brief and/or mild depictions of nudity
- \* Real Gambling - Player can gamble, including betting or wagering real cash or currency
- \* Sexual Themes - Mild to moderate sexual references and/or depictions. May include partial nudity
- \* Sexual Violence - Depictions of rape or other violent sexual acts
- \* Simulated Gambling - Player can gamble without betting or wagering real cash or currency
- \* Some Adult Assistance May Be Needed - Intended for very young ages
- \* Strong Language - Explicit and/or frequent use of profanity
- \* Strong Lyrics - Explicit and/or frequent references to profanity, sex, violence, alcohol or drug use in music
- \* Strong Sexual Content - Graphic references to and/or depictions of sexual behavior, possibly including nudity
- \* Suggestive Themes - Mild provocative references or materials
- \* Tobacco Reference - Reference to and/or images of tobacco products
- \* Use of Drugs - The consumption or use of illegal drugs
- \* Use of Alcohol - The consumption of alcoholic beverages
- \* Use of Tobacco - The consumption of tobacco products
- \* Violence - Scenes involving aggressive conflict

We are most familiar with the E, T and M ratings as these are the majority of what we see on video games. For those like me, still clinging to the past, the original Xbox is the only console from the previous generation to feature Parental Controls. With these controls you can:

- \* Decide which games your children can play based on the ESRB rating.
- \* Make sure the movies your children watch are appropriate based on the MPAA rating.
- \* Control access to Xbox Live:
- \* Control voice communications.
- \* Disable content purchases.
- \* Limit your child's exposure to content created by other members of the Xbox Live community.

Parents can give their children an even safer entertainment experience now that the Xbox 360 has arrived. With the Xbox 360 you can:

- \* Decide which games your children can play based on the ESRB rating.
- \* Make sure the movies your children watch are appropriate based on the MPAA rating.
- \* Override your own restrictions so you can decide, case by case, which games and movies your children can play when there are "exceptions to the rule."
- \* Control access to the online Xbox Live® service:

- \* Have approval authority over your child's online friends list and determine what types of communications are allowed.
- \* Restrict your child's online profile and presence (online status) to specific people.
- \* Create personal settings for each child, which applies to their Xbox Live account even when they use it outside the home (for example, on a friend's Xbox 360 console).
- \* Limit your child's exposure to content created by other members of the Xbox Live community.

The best thing you can do for your children is to do your homework before buying a game, and then play the game first or along with them. That is the only way you will know for sure if the content is something you are comfortable with.

Occasionally you will find a game that pretty much speaks for itself. For instance, 50 Cent: Bulletproof is described by the ESRB as containing blood and gore, intense violence, sexual themes, strong language, and use of drugs. Are you sure you want your little seven-year-old angel to experience all of that?

Sometimes when I'm playing Halo 2 online, I am amazed at how many very small children are playing. This game is rated "M."

Ok, ok, maybe it just upsets me they are so much better than I am, but I still sometimes want to reach through my HDTV and slap their parents. This will likely be a "swing and a miss" as obviously, by the language little Timmy is using, his parents are not even in the same county!

Internet safety is another issue we as parents need to take seriously. For my family, the absolute best thing I've done is to buy a good internet filter. There are many different filter companies,



but my favorite is Bsafe, which is found at [www.bsafes.com](http://www.bsafes.com).

Netsweeper is another filter that can be accessed through different ISP's. Both of these filters have "Allow" and "Block" lists that can help you further protect your children from questionable content.

Try to find an email filter as well. Imagine my surprise one day when myteenagedaughterreceivedanemailwithanattachmentcontainingXXXpictures! Remember, your kids can receive the same porn emails you do.

Keep your computer in a public location in your home and become very familiar with it. One day I noticed I had to re-enter my login information when I accessed 2old2play. Upon further

**It's 3:30!** Do you know where your children are?

inspection, I noticed my temporary internet files, history and cookies were also gone.

This should always raise a red flag. Someone is obviously trying to cover their tracks. Luckily for me and not my teenage son, my internet filter allows me to automatically send an email to myself of all of the sites that were blocked the previous day. The missing history, files and cookies were just a clue as to something being amiss.

The email showed me that my son had been doing some searches for porn. I was able to have a conversation with him and hopefully now he understands that "Dad knows everything."

Do you have a teenager? My guess is that he or she has a page on www.myspace.com. This is the hottest site amongst teens and college kids and there are new similar sites being created every day.

The only problem with this type of site is that people can upload and post explicit pictures of themselves and friends. The site has become a singles bar on the internet and unfortunately your middle or high school student is being courted by college students, young adults, and even perverts on the prowl.

Do you really want that for your impressionable teen? Ask your son or daughter if they frequent that site. Ask them for permission to see their page. If they refuse, you might have a problem.

Most of us have or will soon have kids. I believe the secret to being a good parent can be summed up in these four short sentences.

- Love your kids.**
- Get involved.**
- Stay connected.**
- Keep them safe.**

**ScottyATC**

**WIKI facts**

PvP combat has its roots in various MUDs like Gemstone III. However, while the ability to kill another player existed in many MUDs, it was usually frowned upon because of general strict adherences and heavy influences from role-playing games like Dungeons & Dragons.

-- Wikipedia.org

PVP: The term PvP originated in Neverwinter Nights, a multi-player roleplaying game hosted by America Online in 1992. Originally intended to be PvM, a bug was found that allowed cast spells to damage other players. After much discussion, PvP was sanctioned and certain areas were labeled "Player versus Player" and the term PvP was born.

-- Wikipedia.org

**COUNTER STRIKE SOURCE**

**Counter Strike: Source Tournament**

2old2play.com will be hosting their first Counter Strike: Source (CS:S) tournament late May or early June! If you have a PC that meets the minimum requirements (1.2Ghz Processor, 256MB RAM, Microsoft Windows 98 or better, and a sound card) you can purchase CS:S for \$19.95 at <http://storefront.steampowered.com> or a local retailer and apply for the tournament.

We will be hosting training sessions all month long for anyone interested in battling it out online. The 2old2play game server is equipped with A.I bots for practice (they're pretty good), and currently supports up to 10-players. The server is loaded with stock maps and custom maps some of which include: cs\_office, de\_dust, cs\_italy, fy\_snow, aim\_ag\_texture4, and de\_alivemetal.

The 2old2play server is located in Texas, USA and is hosted by Game Daemons. The central location makes it great for 2old2play members from all over the United States and Canada. The server is up twenty four hours a day and always has plenty of bots to pwn if you're bored at home.

**REGISTER NOW!**

The tournament details will follow as registration increases. If you would like to be part of the tournament please private-message SGreth on 2old2play.com with the subject "CS:S registration" to receive details. Registration deadline is May 22<sup>nd</sup> so get your private-messages in NOW. Keep an eye out on the Counter Strike: Source forum for up-to-date tournament details.

**The winner of the tournament will receive the PC game: Galactic Civilizations II: Dread Lords.**

**There can be only one winner so sharpen your knife.**



**Everyone runs faster with a knife!**

# Xbox Live:

## A parent's point of view...

**T**he Internet and online gaming have been around for quite a few years. Online gaming really took off due to computer gaming. Such games as Doom, Warcraft, F2D Lightening 3, Starcraft and Command and Conquer contributed to the growth of the online community. It's come a long way to where we are now with the Microsoft's Xbox Live.

In the early years of online gaming we were only able to communicate by typing messages with our keyboards. Then we reached the point of actually communicating using a headset and speaking directly to other players. This was a revolutionary feature compared to what we had when I was a kid playing on a Commodore 64. My buddy had to be sitting next to me and we had to share the keyboard to play together.

Now there's Xbox Live. It's one of the greatest advancements in gaming technology so far on a console. Xbox Live has a simple user interface that allows you to press a single button and become connected to players all around the world. It doesn't get much easier. I would love to be a kid again because I could have virtually unlimited hours to play online with my friends, or have 'lan parties' every other weekend.

After saying all those great things about Xbox Live and gaming communication technology, I still have a huge problem with it. I do not care about getting beaten down by a twelve year old kid, nor do I care about the occasional curse words that come from that same twelve-year-old's mouth. But there is a difference between swearing at the game because you messed up and calling another gamer a curse word, racial slur, or other derogatory term.

I have been called several things on Xbox Live from kids that have not reached puberty. You can tell this from their squeaky voices that talk about what they did in school that day. Some of these children using these harsh words could be your children.

I can hear it now. In the back of your head, you are saying to yourself, "My child NEVER says those words! How could you even suggest that?"

Well, I hear it nightly.

You believe your child is in bed by 10pm on a school night and 11pm on the weekends? Wrong! I work until midnight central time and I get online at about 1am. Children in North America are still playing while most of the continent is dark by 1am central time. It even surprises me.

So you think I'm just trying to get parents upset. Blowing smoke. Well, I'm not. One night, just for fun, sneak up on your kid while they're playing on Xbox Live. Listen to the things that come out of their mouth. I would be willing to bet that it's not words you taught them.



Then, one night when you wake up to use the bathroom, sneak in and check on your kid. Make sure that the little green light on the front panel of the Xbox is actually off. Your child may be sneaking out of bed to play Xbox all night long.

Xbox Live itself is a great gaming outlet, and even though it's hard to choose who your child is playing with, you can still monitor what they do and make sure they are not the ones causing an unpleasant experience for the rest of us.

My suggestion is to find out who's on your child's "Friends List" and who's in their "Clan." Most times, if you walk in while your child is playing, you'll be able to tell if your kid is with a group of other nice kids or a group that is causing hell for the rest of us. You can listen in to what they're saying to your child. There is a setting on the Xbox for voice output over the speakers. I would suggest you have your child enable that so you can listen to their chatter until you trust who they are playing with.

Xbox Live is a great way to interact with other gamers from all over the world, but it can also turn into a place worse than a biker bar on a Friday night. As an adult gamer, I ask that you just pay attention to your children and what they are saying and doing, and make sure they are in bed at the appropriate time.

You never know who's at the other end of that microphone.

For more information on family friendly gaming, you can also check out the following link. <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/support/familysettings/>

**Mike James**

# SEX

## in Video Games

**W**hat place does sex have in video games? It's a complicated question and one that can be approached from a multitude of angles.

While few would argue that, without sex, the Internet would be little more than a nice place to view a few photos from the National Archives, when it comes to suggesting that gaming might owe a similar debt to the "creative juices," many people find a villain just waiting to corrupt today's youth.

A comprehensive review of this topic isn't appropriate for this forum, so we will instead view three distinct areas of interest: the driving force behind sex in games, the potential impact of sex in games, and the actual state of sex in games.

The driving force behind sex in games isn't hard to decipher. Most of the people who like to game also like sex. Most people who like to game also like chocolate cake, so there must be a bit more behind sex and gaming than simply liking both. Ask yourself: Are you more likely to leave a good gaming session for some good sex or for some good chocolate cake?

Of the rather high percentage of gamers who like sex, there is a slightly smaller subgroup that also enjoys pornography. Notice I didn't say, "who are raging porn addicts," although there are certainly plenty of gamers who are. No, I think it's fair to say that, when presented with some sort of sexually oriented materials that appeal to their particular tastes, the average gamer would not close his or her eyes. Since I'll discuss impact later, let's assume, for now, that I am only talking about adult gamers.

I believe the best comparison I can use here is to dredge up an old candy commercial. "Hey, you got games in my sex. Hey, YOU got sex in my gaming!" In other words, sex is already a game much of the time. Or, for all of your sakes, I sure hope it is. Games in the bedroom are probably the number one thing that ensures you keep going back to the bedroom.

Don't take my word for it. Sex toys and games rake in millions every year worldwide. Sex toys range from \$5.00 novelties to elaborate machines costing thousands, but the most popular game of all, role playing, is free!

Most of us are already used to sex including games. Is it really that much of a leap to see us glom onto the concept of games including sex? It's already done frequently, both with video and traditional games. The same Twister the Brady Bunch used to play can be used for a decidedly non-Brady good time as well. Any on-line game with any kind of chat function, text or verbal, is guaranteed to support a sub-set of players who use that feature to share information a bit more personal than who has the most powerful weapon, so to speak.

The interesting thing is how up in arms some people can get over the thought of sex in games.



I have news for them: Sex has been part of games for as long as there have been games. We've just had to put it in there ourselves most of the time. Let a developer or modder put sex into a game "officially," and it's suddenly a much bigger deal for some inexplicable reason.

The bottom line is that the driving force behind sex in games is that we cannot imagine one without the other. If developers don't imagine it for us, we imagine it for ourselves.

So far, sex and gaming is looking pretty damn good. Is there a downside? Perhaps. I'm going to try very hard not to inject any of my own opinions into this section so that you can form your own. To do that, I'm going to argue both sides of the issue raised when minors gain access to a game with sexually explicit materials.

The best argument for saying not to worry about sex in games and minors is to say that whatever they see or do in games is extremely mild compared to what they can see and do on the web in general. Compare the results of a web search for any pornographic topic you can think of, to viewing 2D and 3D representations of some of those same acts. Is there really any comparison?

In games, kids blow each other up, stab each other, and most enjoy watching the blood splatter. If you're going to be disturbed, be disturbed by that, not by the fact that some of those game characters can be turned into sex objects.

Unless it's a game specifically designed with sex in mind (in which case, parents, pay attention to what the heck your children are buying and playing!), seeing some pixels arranged to look like a naked woman just isn't the soul-scarring moment it's often painted to be. In fact, if your child is spending lots of time watching some grainy, pixilated mod that resembles sex, be glad that they're not on any of the thousands of sex websites or, worse yet, in a chat room talking to who-knows-what kind of freak.

Hmm, so is sex in video games really no big deal for kids?

Not so fast. Let's look at the bigger picture. It can be argued games are a huge influence in how a child learns and develops. We hope they learn sportsmanship and the reality behind winning and losing on the playing field. We give our children games and toys, some just for fun, others for their educational value. We hope they learn from them.

In fact, play is one of the most important influences on a child's development. So, is it safe to take play and incorporate lessons most children aren't yet cognitively prepared to learn?

If a young boy plays a game where it's "fun" to force a "ho" into sexual situations, does some of that leave an impression on that child's real world view of women? If a young girl gets so used to seeing sex in games that it adds to the general devaluation of sexual intimacy our society is going through, has she been harmed?

I am really not one of those who think young people play a game and then go kill someone. However, I do know that young minds are always learning. If the most fun "lessons" children get relate to a general disdain for human life and human dignity, then I think it's possible some games are doing a disservice to our children's future.

How much does sex in games impact our children? It's difficult to say. However, I think it's relatively safe to say that, if there is an influence, it's probably not a very good one.

That leaves adults. Any influence there? I doubt it, except that adults might enjoy the whole thing a bit more because, as mentioned earlier, sex and games go hand in hand for most folks. I suppose some psycho will one day use sex in a video game as part of their insanity plea, but in general, I think most adults can handle it.

Our last topic examines the actual state of sex in today's games. Usually any sex put there by the developer is far tamer than even the softest porn available on the web. If a modder comes up with something sexual, it's probably not of the highest quality, and it most likely feels more like a mildly naughty thrill than an actual sexual experience.



However, as mentioned previously, there are those who use the chat features of games to create their own virtual sex clubs. They move those joysticks around and push all the right buttons to find their own entertainment in the game.

But the same can be said for pretty much any type of public communication. If there's any way to talk sex, lots of people will do it. Just check your company's Code of Business Conduct document to see how much of it relates to not engaging in any sort of sexual communication.

Beyond the above talk of sex in gaming, there is an actual effort on the development side to merge sex and gaming in a meaningful way. Some of what follows is still conceptual, some

## Sex in video games

of it already exists. I owe some gratitude to Wired magazine for including the names of the following games in the April issue.

The Red Light Center is probably the most “realistic” attempt so far. It does not really pretend to be much more than a marketplace at which you can purchase real pornographic materials, sex toys, and even live shows via webcam. I would compare it to a visual GUI for the sex side of the Internet.

Naughty America: The Game, is set to release later this year. It’s going to be “Sims with Sex” for the most part. A virtual dating world where you can look as hot as you want, and take each other’s clothes off if the date goes well. As a 2D game, the realism is pretty limited, but you can get your virtual groove on repeatedly without those pesky rest breaks most of us humans need. If you want to “get real,” each person can always plug in their web cam and see how much they resemble their avatars.

The Holy Grail of pixelated porn is probably a game called 3Feel. It appears to be on a release schedule of “sometime in the next ten years.” It promises to be very high resolution with a wide variety of “moves” available. Game play will undoubtedly be as robust as the plot in most porn movies. If it’s ever released, this will be the game the porn addicts have been waiting for.

Finally, there’s Sociolatron. This one is more of an RPG with sex. It has a lot of reality in it as well – you can go to jail or get hooked on drugs – but it also has a sex system that allows for various postures and acts. This one looks to be a little too real in my book, in terms of the darker side of humanity, but whatever floats your boat. (In case you’re wondering, no, I haven’t played any of these. Just researched them on the web)

Ultimately, the question of whether sex in games is good or bad is a moot one. Games will have sex in them. They already do. Assume sex will become more prevalent, rather than less, as the gaming world develops. Just about anyone who games, will be at least a little intrigued by the concept of combining their two favorite past-times. Children will see it. It’s another thing for parents to guard against and discuss.

Finally, the industry is just starting to develop games where the focus is sex. There’s no way to know how far that development will go, but it’s a safe bet it won’t stop anytime soon. You may one day be worried about more kinds of protection than shields in your games.

We began with the notion that sex and gaming is a difficult concept to properly address. We examined a few small aspects of the topic and end here knowing there is much more to discuss and many more points of view to consider.

As I said early on, the goal here was to present some basics from which you could pursue your own opinion. With the hope that I have achieved that goal, I leave you with a question: How early do you think you’d get in line for the first x-rated game starring a certain raider of tombs?

**WebMonkee**

## WIKI facts

Altered Beast is a platform/fighting game that puts the player in control of a hero who has been raised from the dead to rescue Zeus’ daughter, Athena. The player battles undead and demonic hordes, controlling the shape shifting hero. He must defeat several levels in order to save the kidnapped goddess.

-- Wikipedia.org

Red Baron is a computer game for the PC, created by Damon Slye at Dynamix and published by Sierra Entertainment. It was released in 1990. In 1996 Computer Gaming World named Red Baron as #4 on its Best Games of All Time list on the PC.

-- Wikipedia.org

Dynamix, Inc. was an American developer of computer games founded in 1984. After self-publishing their games for a short while, in 1990 Dynamix was bought by Sierra On-Line. Dynamix created some of their most famous games, including a line of adventures and flight simulations that included Red Baron and The Adventures of Willy Beamish. They also created the puzzle game The Incredible Machine, along with the spinoff Sid & Al’s Incredible Toons.

-- Wikipedia.org





# Epiphany through a Paradigm Shift

A personal view of online group relationships.

**H**ave you noticed how emotionally attached you get to online groups like, for example, Xbox Live (XBL) Clans? Ever wondered why? Maybe you didn't, but I did shortly after joining my first Clan. I found myself saying how happy I was to be in a Clan with nice people and how I was glad I found this place and how I would be lost without it. I noticed other people saying the same things and I thought how can this be? None of this is proven to be good for me or us. So why the emotional, giddy feelings of attachment? Why all the gushingly good words? Why were we so dog gone happy to be part of a group we knew nothing about?

I'm certainly no psychologist, but here are my thoughts on why this happens. We all instinctively want to belong to a group. We crave attachment to other people. No doubt this has a lot to do with wanting to be socially successful through collaboration with others. Normally in real life we are a bit stand-offish and take relationships slowly because real people can really hurt you. The online world is different. It's ethereal in nature and for the most part, exists in our imagination. We can instantly become part of an "entity" that will accept us, support us and not be hurtful. We imagine expressions of acceptance on the faces of those who are already part of the group. All this occurs even though we cannot see or feel the people behind the words and voices. Strange, isn't it?

Not long after we join an online group, we soon learn that even through the written word, ethereal voices, and actions that it is not a perfect world. Something out "there" may actually hurt us. Such is the reality of human relations, even through the online ether. We may find ourselves being the aggressor, the recipient of aggression, or both in negative relations. So now we've gone from being "in love" with a group to being saddened and even very hurt by it. Suddenly we are faced with picking up the pieces of our online lives and moving on, hopefully a little wiser. The only thing is, if we don't know what caused it in the first place, we may go right out and do it all over again.

My experience with the break up of a Clan was an example of this situation. A change was being forced on the members and we were not prepared for it. Conflict had arisen that threatened to change my perfect imaginary world causing me to be upset and worried. Feelings of loyalty and disloyalty were coursing through my psyche. How could this "entity", that I had given myself to, hurt me by becoming an "entity" I didn't really want to be part of? Strange, isn't it?

I found myself spouting verbal diarrhea about how fleeting the online world was. How our choices are affected by the latest games, hardware, and economics. I was starting to say "be ready for change" because you cannot expect it to stay the same for long. Unfortunately, I wasn't as ready for it as I thought. I was still unprepared for leaving that Clan. I had

given myself to the Clan and it didn't want me anymore. Of course I was unintentionally part of the problem, which I accept. There are two sides to every story.

So what is this "epiphany through a paradigm shift" I said this topic was about? You've read all this crap and you want an answer, now! Well, I've already said part of it. Be ready for and expect change. Don't let this ethereal world suck you into an emotional bond too quickly. These are real relationships with real people and you can still hurt and be hurt by them.

I'm not quite sure what to say my current state of mind is towards this stuff but I feel more comfortable just trying to have fun while I can and when it becomes less fun I may not wait for the bubble to burst next time. If we treat online groups more as places to visit than places to stay we will likely endure fewer problems.

Feel cheated? I hope not.

**DEEP NNN**



## Epiphany (n.)

A revelatory manifestation of a divine being.

- A sudden manifestation of the essence or meaning of something
- A comprehension or perception of reality by means of a sudden intuitive realization: "I experienced an epiphany, a spiritual flash that would change the way I viewed myself" (Frank Maier).

## Paradigm (n.)

- One that serves as a pattern or model.
- A set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual discipline.



# A Woman's View on Gaming

## An unprecedented merger of your entertainment activities

**I'm a 36-year-old wife and mother of a 13-year-old girl and a 9-year-old boy. Our whole family is into gaming. I've been playing video games since the Atari 2600. The video game world has come a long way since then, hasn't it? Gone are the days of spending all your time in the mall arcade, not to mention spending all of mom and dad's quarters too. Is it just me, or does it seem that the arcades are empty these days? In my opinion, they have become a thing of the past.**

Being a woman gamer, I've had my share of insults thrown at me. I've been called everything BUT a girl. Are some people just that intimidated by a female gamer? Is there still that old opinion that women aren't as good as the guys? I've even been told that I didn't have any business playing video games and that I should be in the kitchen making dinner. Although, if I recall correctly, that was after I had totally owned the guy that said that to me. On the other hand, there have been times when, after finding out that I was a chick, guys would say how cool it was that I played video games. They thought it was even cooler when they found out my age and that I had two kids.



I had never been what you would call "addicted" to video games. Before Halo came along, the Resident Evil and Silent Hill series were my favorites and I'm looking forward to more of those games being made in the future. We bought our first Xbox just for Halo. My husband Dave (GT: Gutteral Rumble), who is also a site member, and our son instantly got

addicted to Halo. I would sit and watch them play, thinking to myself "what an absolutely stupid game". I couldn't for the life of me figure out why in the world they made such a big deal about it. So, one day while hubby was at work and the kids were at school, I decided to pop Halo in the Xbox and see for myself what all the fuss was about. That, in my opinion, was one of the best things I had ever done. I was completely hooked by the time I finished the first level. When the release of Halo 2 was announced, I don't know who was more excited about it. And yes, hubby stood in line over night waiting for our copy of Halo 2. Now, he's the one asking me "Are you playing that game AGAIN?"



I was so happy to have found [2old2play.com](http://2old2play.com) because online play was getting rather tiresome with all of the "tim-mies" running around. I, along with my husband, am in the 2old2pwn clan. We have never had so much fun playing Halo as we do with this bunch. They're like a second family to me. And if it weren't for them, my online play would have ceased to exist. On a little side note, my absolute favorite game is Shotties and Stickies on Midship. The other girls in the clan would probably agree with me that this is the best game. It's funny that all the girls seem to prefer the shotgun.

So, let's see. On to what I think about what games my kids play. For starters, our 13 year old daughter loves the Resident Evil and Fatal Frame series. She is, also, very into doll



## A Woman's View on Gaming

making. For those of you who might not know what I am talking about, go to [www.thedollpalace.com](http://www.thedollpalace.com) and you'll see what she likes to do. It's very creative stuff. Our son likes a variety of games. His list of favorite games would be both of the Halo games, Far Cry Instincts, Splinter Cell series, all of the Tony Hawk games, and he has played all of the Metal Gear games. When determining which games my son can play, we don't necessarily go by the rating. We go by our own experience with it. If there is a lot of "language" in it, he doesn't get to play it. Anything stronger than the "F" bomb and it's a big NO, I'm sure he and his sister have heard a lot worse than the "F" word in school, but that doesn't mean they have to be subjected to it at home. Games that have strong sexual themes or innuendos in them are also on his "DO NOT PLAY" list.

As far as violence goes, well, that's a tough one. We use our own judgment when it comes to that. There are definitely some violent games that our son is not allowed to play; any of the "Grand Theft Auto" titles or any game that has anything to do with gang activities. More or less, what I am saying is that any game that involves killing just for the sake of killing is a NO-NO. If killing is involved in a video game, I would rather it be because they are trying to save their life or the lives of other's around them. Before letting children play violent games, any parent with enough sense would let their child know that what is in the game stays in the game and should NEVER take place in "real life". Educating your child on what's right and wrong comes into play here.



In case you were wondering, no, my son is not a timmy. We've taught him better than that. He knows better than to act like he has half a brain. He learned a long time ago what happens when he wants to start screaming and disrespecting other people. It has never happened again. Sure, he still gets peeved but don't we all?

So there you have it. Hope you enjoyed my article. This was the first time I have ever written anything before. And before I go, I would like to add a couple of things. First I would like to thank those responsible for the creation of 2old2play. What an awesome place this is. And secondly I would like to say thank you to my clan, 2old2pwn, for having me as a member. 2old2pwn = BCE I love you guys!!

***kweenie (kweenofthedamd)***

# The Lady Q&A:

## Woman's Perspective on Game Marketing

**1. Do you believe there is anything in game design that could be improved to attract more girls into gaming at an early age?**

I started playing at the age of five. That's when we got our Atari 2600. I remember wanting to play Pac-Man and just had to have an Atari. I believe the main reason for getting it was for my parents, but they could tell their friends it was for us, the kids. Watching my mom play really helped me get into gaming. She was great. I think it's partly environment that attracts young girls and the types of games that are available that interest them, e.g. Dora the Explorer, Blues Clues, Sesame Street, Bob the Builder-some girls like him too. Of course those are pre-school types, but you get the idea.

**2. Women seem to head into the direction of puzzle games like Myst, 7th Guest, or RPG games. Is this because of the storylines or something that draw in females where the guys are just happy killing things?**

I can't speak for other women gamers, but I have always liked puzzle and RPGs because they're leisurely and a more relaxing type of atmosphere than say a FPS. I usually don't know much about a storyline before I play a RPG. I just start playing and if it grabs my attention then I continue, if not, I don't.

**3. Do you think that games are advertised on TV and in magazines towards men more than women since they're dominating the market and companies want to target the majority?**

I believe games are definitely targeted towards men, but that's because they don't know that women have fun playing games like racing, sports, and shooters.

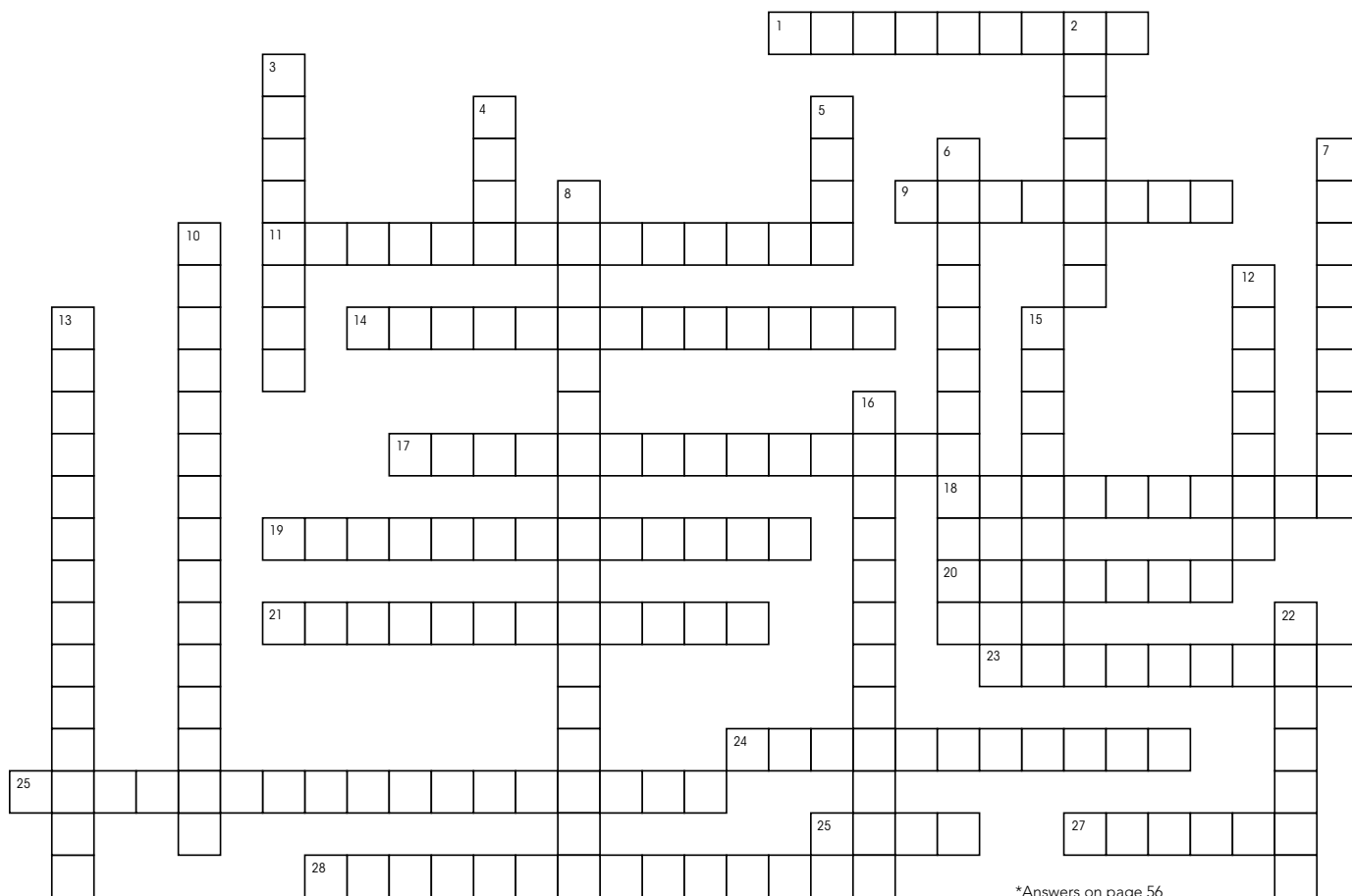
**4. Does the fact that games like fighters and even sports, "volleyball", games containing women with large racks or half nude hinder a girl's/woman's chance to play that game? Do you think it really doesn't bother women because they just want a game that interests them regardless of the sexy eye candy that's probably made for men to find interesting?**

Again, I can't speak for other women, but it doesn't make me want to go right out and buy a game where the whole game is nothing but half-naked girls playing volleyball or wrestling one another, but that's just me. Now if a volleyball game or wrestling game had a few half-naked girls and it also had guys in it too, then I wouldn't mind playing, if it's a good game that is.

***DruishPrincess***



## Video Game Titles



\*Answers on page 56

### ACROSS

- 1 Double Dash!
- 9 Designed by Will Wright and published in 1990 by Maxis, in which the player controls the development of an entire planet.
- 11 The games allow the player to take on the role of a criminal in a big city, typically a lowly individual who rises in the ranks of organized crime over the course of the game.
- 14 The plot of Metafight is centered around Kane Gardner, pilot of the battle tank "Metal Attacker", who lands on the planet Sophia the 3rd to lead the attack against the invading emperor Goez.
- 17 To combat the ghosts, Professor E. Gadd arms you with two of his inventions: a Poltergust 3000 and a Game Boy Horror.
- 18 A 1986 video game by Konami for the Nintendo Famicom based on the hit motion picture
- 19 The player is an American soldier named BJ Blazkowicz attempting to escape from the eponymous Nazi stronghold.
- 20 The player must navigate his spacecraft, an Arwing, through environments while various enemies (spaceships, robots, creatures, etc.) attack him.
- 21 Billy, Jimmy, and Marian.
- 23 Word had gotten out to the western world that deep within the Outer Heaven stronghold, a weapon of mass destruction was being constructed. Government officials order the high-tech Special Forces unit FOXHOUND to infiltrate the fortress assess the situation
- 24 Simon Belmont
- 25 Originally published by Dynamix, this game was simply incredible.
- 26 1993's landmark title in the first-person shooter genre.
- 27 The game takes place in Chicago during December 1941, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The game character is Theodore 'Ace' Harding, a retired boxer who is working as a private eye.
- 28 Fighter Hayabusa, Starman, and Kin Corn Karn were 3 of the participants.

### DOWN

- 2 Up to three simultaneous players control the monsters George, Lizzie, or Ralph.
- 3 The player controls a nameless thug who fights a variety of street gangs on his way to save his girlfriend. Unlike other similar games like Double Dragon and Final Fight, the playfield is limited to one two-screen-wide area (a subway platform, a park, an a parking lot) and does not scroll continuously.
- 4 Rhymes with Fist.
- 5 Bungie Studios is no angel.
- 6 Contradictory to its title the game seems to have never ending releases.
- 7 The main character was a small boy with wings named Pit, on a quest to find the Three Sacred Treasures, rescue Parthena the goddess of light, and free Angel Land from the grasp of Medusa the Goddess of Darkness.
- 8 The player is single-handedly responsible for defeating a powerful cult; stopping an insatiable plague; thwarting an attack on the city in the games title, and many other side quests.
- 10 Tiberian Dawn
- 12 Some scientists believe that this life-form may have been the cause of destruction of life on SR388.
- 13 After the success of the original game in 1998, a book and a D&D module based on its plot was published.
- 15 Side-scrolling arcade fighting game released in 1989 by Sega. The game places the player in control of one of three warriors each bent on revenge against the vile dictator Death Adder.
- 16 Sid Meier created it for Microprose in 1991.
- 22 The background story involves a "what-if" scenario in which the United States tries to devise fusion power resulting in a hegemonic United States that has less reliance on petroleum.

T H T C O N D E M N E D G G I D K F A  
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 E S J V O V E X E C Q B G K E H G T D  
 D P J K S E B S M F B A K L P Q L T J  
 A Y T U C Y O Q V E B O T V U K O T W  
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 T C A F B Z Q G H O E N P Y U H P H L  
 E P J A K H E T G S T A U F T Z L S U  
 B L T X R I N G K I N G R A Z S R U E  
 I V A H S E Y E N E D L O G G C D O O

**Word Bank**

Condemned  
 Red Alert  
 Lode Runner  
 Full Throttle  
 Sega CD  
 Mega Man  
 Gauntlet

Tetris  
 Mother Brain  
 IDKFA  
 JUSTIN BAILEY  
 Final Fight  
 Ring King  
 Mario

Gabriel Knight  
 Spy Hunter  
 Mortal Kombat  
 Golden Eye  
 Total War  
 NARC

# Building Your LinkSys Router

## Using Custom Open Source Software

### History

When cable modem technology became available in our town, we jumped at the opportunity to get it.

Once we did, we needed to figure out how we were going to allow all of the computers in our house access to the network. We decided to start off using a PC running Linux as the router.

The Linux PC worked great for a long time, but it was a little more work than getting a pre-configured all-in-one router. Using Linux on a PC meant we always had to keep updated on the latest exploits and had to upgrade when appropriate.

We also decided to go with Vonage VOIP (voice over internet protocol) phone service. Linux is capable of doing Quality of Service (QoS), which allows you to prioritize your network services to make some things (VOIP, Xbox Live) higher priority than others (web browsing, Bittorrent).

That meant one of us had to figure out how to configure Linux to work with QoS. We decided to go with the all-in-one router. We chose a Linksys RT31P2 router designed to work with Vonage. The router didn't have wireless capabilities so we also had a Netgear wireless router to service our laptops.

The Linksys RT31P2 was a piece of crap. It always died and had to be reset. We lived with it for a while because we were too lazy to get a new one.

When we got the Xbox 360 everything changed. The router did fine with one Xbox 360, but couldn't keep two Xbox 360s connected simultaneously. One person was always getting disconnected. Enough was enough.

Routers have progressed greatly in just a few years. Now there are routers that run Linux (a Microsoft Windows alternative) instead of proprietary or locked-down firmware from the vendor. Firmware is a lightweight, stable operating system many devices implement such as DVD players, network appliances, radar detectors, etc.

We decided to go with a router capable of running Linux as the firmware.

A few Linksys routers will run Linux as firmware, but not all of them.

### WRT54GL

We initially chose the WRT54GS router. We found out the newer versions of the WRT54GS, version 5, did not support Linux. A little research uncovered which Linksys routers supported Linux. Here's the list we came up with:

WRTSL54GS

WRT54GS v1.0 through v4.0

WRT54GL

WRT54G v1.0 through v4.0

We decided on the WRT54GL because the box said it was compatible with Linux. We figured if the box said it was compatible, we couldn't go wrong.

### OpenWRT

In searching for Linux distributions to install on the Linksys router, I discovered the site <http://www.linksysinfo.org/>. On linksysinfo.org I found a list of different Linux distributions and a short description of each. The site outlines what each distribution has to offer. I decided to go with the OpenWRT distribution because linksysinfo.org said it was the most configurable.

Once the distribution was chosen, I had the task of getting OpenWRT onto the router. I went against all my engineer instincts and actually read the documentation first. It seemed the install of OpenWRT was going to be straight forward.

I had to go to the existing web interface of the router and "upgrade" the firmware by clicking the upgrade button.

Before upgrading the firmware I had to pick which firmware to download. OpenWRT works on many Linksys routers. I had to find the correct OpenWRT for the WRT54GL.

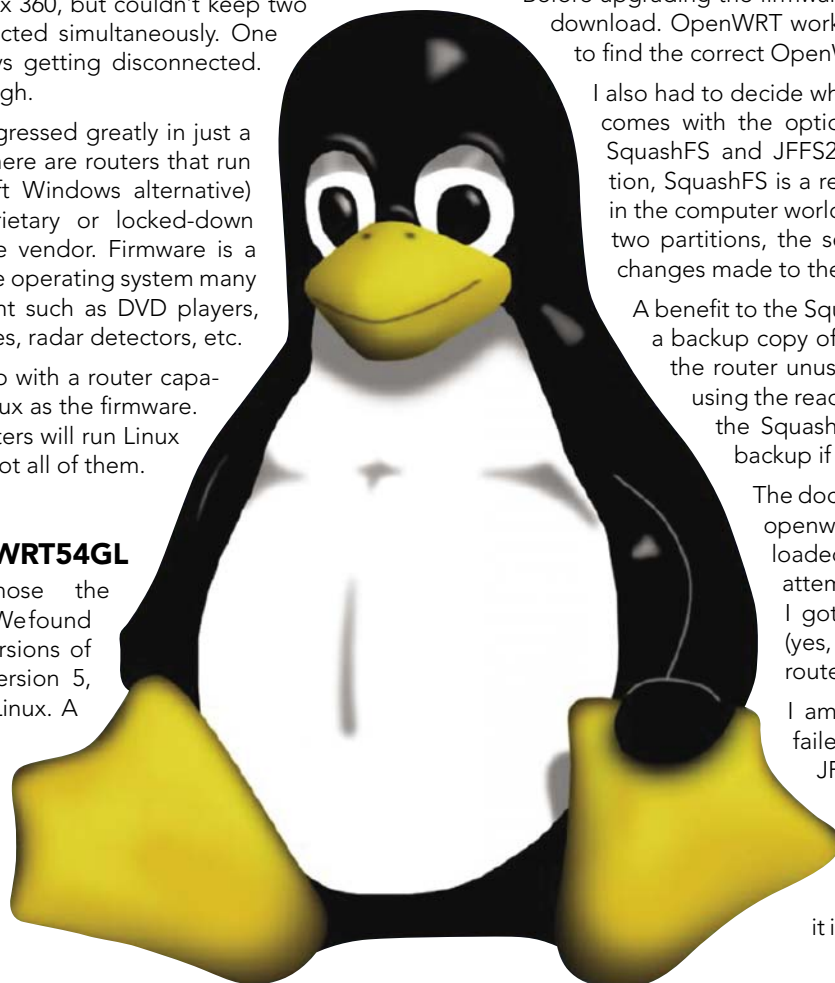
I also had to decide which file system to use. OpenWRT comes with the option of two different file systems; SquashFS and JFFS2. According to the documentation, SquashFS is a read-only piece of storage, known in the computer world as a partition. SquashFS creates two partitions, the second of which is used to store changes made to the firmware.

A benefit to the SquashFS being read-only is there is a backup copy of the firmware. If a change makes the router unusable, you can recover the router using the read-only SquashFS partition. I chose the SquashFS. I liked the idea of having a backup if anything went wrong.

The documentation said to download the `openwrt-wrt54g-squashfs.bin`. I downloaded the appropriate bin file and attempted to "upgrade" the router. I got an error: "Upgrade are failed" (yes, this error was misspelled on the router as well).

I am still not sure why the upgrade failed but I decided to just try the JFFS2 file system instead. I went back to the site and downloaded `openwrt-wrt54g-jffs2.bin`.

I went to the webpage on the Linksys router, which by default it is 192.168.1.1, and hit the upgrade



button. I selected the openwrt-wrt54g-jffs2.bin I had just downloaded. The upgrade completed and I was running OpenWRT. Once OpenWRT is installed on the router, it is in a useable state. The first thing that needs to be done is to set a password for the router. This is done by using telnet, a program readily available in Microsoft Windows and most other operating systems.

There is also an option to use MAC Address filtering. A MAC address is a unique 48-bit numeric pattern that makes all of your networking gear unique from all other networking gear (like a car vehicle identification number makes each car unique). This will only allow the specified MAC addresses to connect to your wireless network. It's a good idea to help prevent unauthorized people from using your wireless network.



**OPEN SOURCE**  
This product may contain material licensed to you under the GNU General Public License or other, open-source software licenses. Upon request, open-source software source code is available at cost from LinkSys for at least three years from the product purchase date. For detailed license terms and additional information look at [www.linksys.com/gpl/](http://www.linksys.com/gpl/).

Open a DOS shell window in Microsoft Windows and type "telnet 192.168.1.1." Once connected, there will be a banner telling you to run the passwd command and set a password for the router. At the prompt type passwd and hit enter. It will prompt you for a password.

After changing the password and setting an ESSID for wireless, the only other things that need to be configured are "extras."

As mentioned earlier, we have Vonage as our phone service. I wanted to configure QoS so the Vonage traffic got higher priority than other network traffic. There is a mini-how-to (<http://wiki.openwrt.org/MiniHowtos/QoSHowto?highlight=%28qos%29>) that discusses the two QoS packages available for OpenWRT and how to configure each one.

There is a glitch with the JFFS2 file system. It sometimes initially boots into a read-only mode. If you attempt to change the password and it does not work, reboot the router. Once the router boots, you will be able to telnet to the router and type the passwd command and set the password.

I am hoping that with the new router and the Linux firmware our Xbox live issues will be solved and we will have more router configurability.

As the banner says, once a password is set, telnet is disabled and SSH is enabled. This means you will not be able to use telnet to get to the router, and you will have to use a secured remote connection protocol known as SSH. You can download Putty SSH for free at <http://putty.omnitech.net/> to connect to your router securely.

**References:**

- <http://www.linksys.com>
- <http://openwrt.org/>
- <http://putty.omnitech.net/>

There is also a web interface to configure the router. For some, the web interface may be easier to use. To connect to the router using the web interface, type <http://192.168.1.1> into your browser. The web interface allows you to configure the same things you can configure using SSH.



If you are using wireless networking, you'll also need to configure the wireless ESSID. To configure the ESSID, use your browser to connect to the router. Once connected, find the item at the top of the page labeled "Network" and click on it.

You will be prompted for your password. Leave the username field blank. Once the network settings come up, click on wireless. In the ESSID field put a name for your wireless connection. This is what appears in Windows when it lists the available wireless networks.

# Soon in Stores

## Playstation 2

Title	Release Date
Gallop Racer 2006	5/2/2006
Jaws	5/23/2006
Moto GP 4 OLC	5/23/2006
Over the Hedge	5/9/2006
Rogue Trooper	5/23/2006
The Da Vinci Code	5/15/2006
Ultimate Board Game Classics	5/16/2006

## Playstation Portable

Title	Release Date
Field Commander	5/22/2006
Lemmings	5/23/2006
Field Commander	5/22/2006
Madden NFL Football 2007	8/1/2006
Monster Hunter Freedom	5/23/2006
NBA Ballers: Rebound	5/9/2006

## GameCube

Title	Release Date
Madden NFL 07	8/1/2006
Over the Hedge	5/9/2006
Teen Titans	5/1/2006
Zelda: Twilight Princess	9/1/2006
TC's Splinter Cell Double Agent	9/1/2006

## Nintendo DS

Title	Release Date
Madden NFL Football 2007	8/1/2006
New Super Mario Bros.	5/15/2006
Over the Hedge	5/5/2006
Sudoku-Mania	5/30/2006
New Super Mario Brothers	5/6/2006

## GameBoy Advance

Title	Release Date
Cars	6/6/2006
Juka and the Monophonic Menace	6/1/2006
Over the Hedge	5/5/2006
Scurge: Hive	6/1/2006

## PC

Title	Release Date
Desperados 2: Cooper's Revenge	5/2/2006
GRAV	5/2/2006
Semper Fidelis: Marine Corps	5/2/2006
SpellForce 2: Shadow Wars	5/2/2006
Flight Deck v4.0	5/3/2006
KnightShift Special Edition	5/3/2006
Origin Of The Species	5/3/2006

## Xbox 360

Title	Release Date
[eM] -eNCHANT arM-	6/1/2006
Hitman: blood Money	5/30/2006
LOTR: Battle for Middle Earth II	6/13/2006
Rockstar Games Table Tennis	5/22/2006
Test Drive Unlimited	6/20/2006
TimeShift	5/9/2006
X-Men: The Official Game	5/9/2006
XB360 Game Screen	5/18/2006

## Xbox

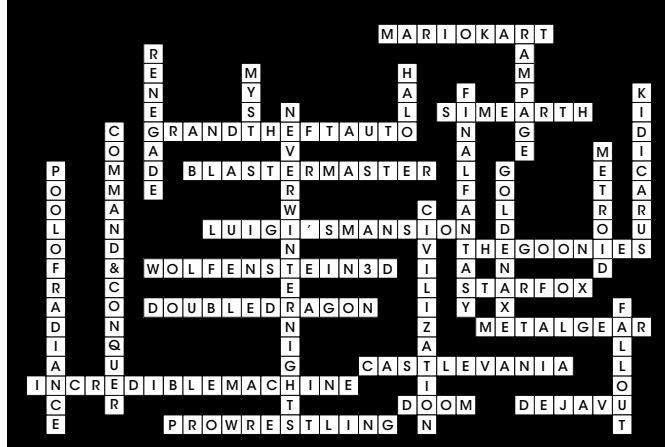
Title	Release Date
Fuel	5/16/2006
Jaws	5/23/2006
Over the Hedge	5/9/2006
Rogue Trooper	5/23/2006
The Da Vinci Code	5/19/2006

## Macintosh

Title	Release Date
Black & White 2	Q3 of '06
Call of Duty 2	Q1 of '06
Civilization IV	TBA
Fable: The Lost Chapters	Q1 of '06
Heroes of Might & Magic V	TBA
Quake 4	March
The Sims 2: Nightlife	March
Unreal Tournament 2007	TBA
WOW: The Burning Crusade	TBA



### Crossword Solution







# Kandie Lueva Bailey

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One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord.  
Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.  
In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.  
Sometimes there were two sets of footprints.  
Other times there were one set of footprints.  
This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life  
When I was suffering from anguish, sorrow, or defeat,  
I could see only one set of footprints.  
So I said to the Lord, "You promised me, Lord, That if I followed you, you would walk with me always.  
But I noticed that during the most trying periods of my life  
There have only been one set of prints in the sand.  
Why, When I have needed you most, you have not been there for me?"  
The Lord replied, "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints Is when I carried you."

**Kandie Bailey was only twenty seven years old when she left us. The world will never be the same for any of us, but Kandie would want us to remember all the lives she touched and all of the fantastic memories. She leaves behind her husband Eddie and three children, Niki, Austin, and Alaina. However, Kandie did not truly leave us; her spirit lives on in the images of her children so that each and every day Kandie's smile can be seen.**

**The community at [2old2play.com](http://2old2play.com) remembers you...**

**Kandie Lueva Bailey  
May 7, 1978 - April 7, 2006**